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REPORT ON THE FIRST RECULAR SESSION

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I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. The outgoing President, Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden), extended his gratitude to the members of the outgoing Bureau as well as to the delegations and staff members of the secretariat who had contributed to the successes and achievements of the Executive Board in 1997. The previous year had been an interesting and important year for the Executive Board, one in which important legislation for both UNDP and UNFPA had been adopted. The number of informal Board meetings attested to the efforts to enhance the awareness of the general public and policy makers on critical development issues.

2. He noted that the Bureau had met on 3 November 1997, 6 November 1997 and 19 January 1998. At those meetings, the Bureau discussed the first regular session of the Executive Board for 1998 and the field visits for 1998. The Bureau had also agreed with the Bureau of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on the programme for the joint meeting of the UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards on the impact of United Nations reform on funds and programmes. He underlined the importance of the issue of funding modalities, which would be examined at the current session for UNDP and at the second regular session for UNFPA.

3. In closing, the President expressed his gratitude for the support and trust received from the Executive Board in 1998 and thanked Mr. Magnus Lennartsson, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Sweden, for his assistance during the year of his Presidency.

Election of the Bureau

4. The Executive Board elected the following Bureau for 1998:

President: H.E. Mr. Jacob Botwe Wilmot (Ghana)

Vice-President: Mr. Atul Khare (India)

Vice-President: Mr. Volodymyr Reshetnyak (Ukraine)

Vice-President: H.E. Mr. John William Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)

Vice-President: Mr. Alan March (Australia)

President's opening remarks

5. The President, H.E. Mr. Jacob Botwe Wilmot (Ghana), stated that he was pleased to take up his duties as President. It was a great honour to be nominated by the African Group for the distinguished position and he thanked everyone for their confidence in confirming the nomination. He paid tribute to the outgoing President, stating that Mr. Lundborg's understanding and knowledge of development issues and special dedication to the work of UNDP and UNFPA made him stand out as a great President. He looked forward to continuing to strengthen the Executive Board's methods of work, which had been enhanced during the previous years. He also thanked the other members of the outgoing Bureau.

6. Many issues before the Executive Board in 1998, such as funding, were critical ones for UNDP and UNFPA, he noted. He emphasized that for programme countries, such as his own, there was a need to get involved fully in the dialogue of the Board and to participate actively in decision-making and planning for the future. The programme countries had the most at stake in how UNDP and UNFPA were governed, and must share their views, thoughts and plans for the future. That was especially relevant to the review of the UNDP successor programming arrangements the Board would undertake later in the year.

7. The President stated that he was particularly interested, as a member of the African Group, to see programme countries from Africa actively involved in the Executive Board dialogue, as they were the recipients of the majority of UNDP and UNFPA core funding, as well as the region with the most least developed countries (LDCs). Previous legislation had underlined the need to direct UNDP and UNFPA assistance to African countries and to LDCs. African countries had much at stake in the discussions that took place in the Board.

8. The year 1998 was also a critical year as the overall United Nations reform adopted by the General Assembly in December 1997 began to be implemented. In operational activities, there were several concrete initiatives, such as the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF) and the "UN House".

9. On Monday, 26 January, the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF would hold their first-ever joint meeting to discuss the impact of United Nations reform at the country level, utilizing the example of Viet Nam. In the Executive Board, continued discussion of the linkage between overall United Nations reform and the work of the funds and programmes was anticipated throughout the year. The triennial policy review of operational activities was scheduled for 1998, an activity that would involve many Board members and observers. The central issues of that review were also those most relevant to the work in the Board.

10. The President stated that in 1998, he would like to see the Executive Board increase its efficiency and effectiveness. He would maintain and enforce the five-minute rule for statements and meetings would commence on time.

11. The President congratulated the newly elected Vice-Presidents and looked forward to working with them and hoped that the Bureau would be able to ensure a smooth and efficient conduct of its work in 1998.

Administrator's opening remarks

12. The Administrator welcomed the Executive Board at its first regular session and congratulated the new Bureau members. He also welcomed the new members of the Board, who began their term in 1998.

13. He then gave a brief update on developments in UNDP. He noted that, based on pledges made at the 1997 Pledging Conference, about $750 million in voluntary contributions for 1998 was predicted. UNDP was particularly grateful to those countries who had announced increased contributions. The organization would make the utmost efforts to see that 1998 core resources at least matched those of 1997.

14. In its resolution 52/12 B of 9 January 1998, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution by which it transferred to UNDP the responsibilities of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for operational activities for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness. The resources for that task would be separate and additional to the resources of UNDP for development activities, provided by a grant from the regular budget of the United Nations for the biennium 1998-1999. UNDP was preparing its response on the basis of the two-year commitment approved by the General Assembly, but beyond that period, the source of funding, which would be central to a continued UNDP role, would have to be clarified, presumably along lines similar to those of 1998-1999. The Emergency Response Division was establishing a Disaster Management Programme to strengthen the capacities of Governments and non-governmental organizations to prepare for and manage risks and vulnerability to disasters and to help to integrate disaster management into development planning and to strengthen United Nations Disaster Management Teams and their national counterparts.

15. He also briefed the Executive Board on the outcome of the autumn 1997 meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the role of UNDP at the third session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the participation of UNDP in the World Trade Organization High-Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development, held in October 1997.

16. In looking ahead at 1998, the Administrator stated that it would be a time for UNDP to consolidate the UNDP 2001 reforms approved by the Executive Board in 1997. At the present session, and throughout the year, funding would be the primary topic, with discussions on both core and non-core resources. The situation regarding core resources remained very serious. UNDP core resources declined by 9 per cent in both 1996 and 1997, in United States dollars, with the decline hitting the poor the hardest. On a positive note, the informal discussions the Board had held earlier in the month demonstrated the commitment of the Board to finding solutions. Core funding would be discussed in the spirit of partnership with programme countries, donors, UNDP, and the Board itself. Core resources were the bedrock of UNDP, and without adequate and predictable levels of core resources, the mandate for poverty eradication could not be fulfilled.

17. On Monday, 26 January, the Viet Nam country team would elaborate their experiences as one of the pilot countries for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and there would be an opportunity to hold a dialogue on the early and expected impact of United Nations reform on the funds and programmes at the country level when the Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF held their first-ever joint meeting. The United Nations Development Group continued to be the driving force within the United Nations system for moving the Secretary-General's reform agenda forward in the areas of the UNDAF, common premises, and the resident coordinator system.

18. The 1998 triennial policy review of operational activities was another key event of 1998. In its role as manager and funder of the resident coordinator system, UNDP was committed to the goals outlined in General Assembly resolution 50/120 and reaffirmed in the Secretary-General's reforms, including the need for a more coherent, coordinated development cooperation system. A strong and

effective resident coordinator system was essential to the success of United Nations reform and to delivering quality results at the country level.

19. Other prominent events in 1998 included the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights and the five-year review of the outcome of the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development, the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on technical cooperation among developing countries, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, now called the Office to Combat Drought and Desertification.

20. One delegation looked forward to seeing UNDP work in the context of the reforms adopted by the General Assembly in December 1997.

Statement by the Secretary of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board

21. The Secretary introduced the agenda and work plan for the first regular session, as contained in document DP/1998/L.1. With the exception of the conference room papers DP/1998/CRP.2, 3 and 4, all documents for the session had been distributed and posted on the Internet by 8 December 1997, six weeks in advance of the first regular session. Unfortunately, owing to the large amount of work to be undertaken by the conference services of the United Nations during the General Assembly, some documents had not been available in official languages within the deadlines. Document DP/1998/4 had been redistributed owing to an error in pagination. Addendum 1 of document DP/1998/3, referred to in the annotated agenda, had been replaced by conference room paper DP/1998/CRP.3. She noted that after the issuance of document DP/1998/L.1, several items for discussion had been added to item 7, Other matters. Those items included a review by the Board of the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance, presented in document DP/1998/CRP.4, an oral report on the results of the Conference of Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification, and a presentation by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) on the conclusions of the meeting that had taken place in Nairobi in November 1997. An information note on the joint meeting with the UNICEF Executive Board, scheduled for 26 January, had also been distributed.

22. A revised version of the workplan contained in the annex to document DP/1998/L.1 had been distributed. The Secretary noted that five delegations had requested a separate discussion on the country cooperation framework for Mozambique. There would be an informal meeting with resident representatives present in New York on 20 January and an informal briefing on UNDP assistance to Myanmar on 21 January.

23. The Executive Board approved the following agenda for its first regular session, as contained in document DP/1998/L.1:

Item 1. Organizational matters

UNDP/UNFPA segment

Item 2. Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

UNFPA segment

Item 3. UNFPA country programmes and related matters

UNDP segment

Item 4. UNDP 2001

Item 5. Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

Item 6. Resource mobilization

Item 7. Other matters

Joint meeting of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards

Impact of United Nations reform on the Funds and Programmes

24. The Executive Board approved the work plan, contained in document DP/1998/L.1, as orally amended.

Report on third regular session 1997

25. The Executive Board approved the report of the third regular session 1997 (DP/1998/1).

26. One delegation took the floor to comment on the report, noting the content of paragraphs 288 through 290, which referred to the follow-up to decision 97/19 on assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo. As had been underlined by the Acting Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa at the time, in accord with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the UNDP mission had identified areas where there could be strengthening of capacity-building of the Government. The Secretary-General had named the Administrator as coordinator of a working group on reconciliation, reconstruction and regional stability, which would be in charge of determining how the United Nations system would participate in the task of reconstruction of the country. His delegation wished to thank the Administrator and the Regional Bureau for Africa for their report submitted at the third regular session 1997. A "Friends of the Congo" meeting had taken place on 4 December 1997 in Brussels. UNDP and UNFPA were encouraged to continue to monitor their special assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo. The delegation requested the Executive Board to consider submitting a written report on assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo at its third regular session 1998.

Work plan 1998

27. The Secretary of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board introduced the draft work plan 1998 (DP/1998/CRP.1). She noted that the document was based on a draft presented at the third regular session 1997 and took into account comments made at that session. The work plan enabled better planning and rationalization of

the work of the Board. The item on reports to the Economic and Social Council would be taken up at the second regular session rather than at the annual session in 1998. Activities of special funds and programmes were summarized in the annual report of the Administrator and were reviewed in depth on a triennial basis. The United Nations Volunteers programme would have an in-depth review in 1998. Strategic evaluations would be presented as they were completed, as requested by one delegation, and reflected in a note to the work plan. It was suggested that an item on country cooperation frameworks be added to the annual and third regular sessions. The agendas for the following sessions would be amended and completed on the basis of decisions made at each previous session.

28. Two delegations requested a report on the transfer of responsibilities for disaster mitigation to UNDP in the context of United Nations reform on UNDP to be added to the agenda for the annual session 1998. Another delegation requested a more general item on the impact of United Nations reform on UNDP, which could also include the above issue. One delegation requested a separate report at the annual session on the follow-up to the implementation of the Integrated Framework for Technical Assistance to Support Trade-related Activities in Least Developed Countries. That delegation also requested that the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF hold joint meetings whenever possible. One delegation requested presentation of information on the effects of globalization at the annual session 1998. Another delegation expressed reluctance to discuss globalization in the Executive Board as it was addressed in many other forums.

29. An item on the round-table process was added to the annual session 1998. An item on the ad hoc working group on the funding strategy was added to all sessions for 1998.

30. The Executive Board approved the annual work plan 1998 as orally amended.

Future sessions

31. The Executive Board agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Second regular session 1998: 20-24 April 1998

Annual session 1998: 8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)

Third regular session 1998: 14-18 September 1998

32. The Executive Board agreed to the following tentative schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1999. One delegation requested that the first regular session 1998 be held later than scheduled.

First regular session 1999: 11-15 January 1999

Second regular session 1999: 5-9 April 1999

Annual session 1999: 14-25 June 1999 (New York)

Third regular session 1999: 13-17 September 1999

33. The Executive Board agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the second regular session 1998 of the Board, as listed in the work plan.

34. The Executive Board approved decision 98/4, an overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1998.

Closing remarks

35. The Administrator emphasized the importance of the decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the present session. A first full-fledged dialogue on non-core funding had resulted in a key decision that gave detailed parameters for the UNDP role in providing support services for national execution and the implementation of UNDP projects. He was grateful to all who had participated in drafting the decision as part of a broad consensus. With regard to the decision on the funding strategy, he looked forward to the progress of the open-ended ad hoc working group on the funding strategy that had been created by the decision.

36. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) extended thanks to the Executive Board and the secretariat.

37. The President thanked all involved with the session and stated that he was pleased with the number of statements by programme countries. The decisions adopted at the present session would have implications for the future of UNDP and would be closely monitored by the Executive Board.

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

II. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF AUDITORS

A. United Nations Development Programme

38. The Associate Administrator introduced the UNDP report on follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/51/5/Add.1) for the biennium 1994-1995 (DP/1998/4).

39. The report was well received, with speakers citing the useful format and the general progress shown in complying with the recommendations of the Board of Auditors. One delegation requested further information on the degree of dialogue between UNDP and UNFPA and the Board of Auditors.

40. Several delegations welcomed the establishment of the Financial Policy and Control Unit to address the weaknesses found in the review of the Reserve for Field Accommodation and hoped that it would soon be fully operational. Some speakers expressed concern about the successful recovery of overpayments. A query was raised as to when the final outcome of the investigation into the Reserve for Field Accommodation would be available.

41. Several speakers looked forward to the fulfilment of recommendation 12 on thematic evaluations and comparison between national execution and other execution approaches. Information should be provided to the Executive Board on the capacity criteria for national execution as early as possible.

42. One speaker requested information on the relationship between UNDP and other system partners with regard to coordination at the country level.

43. Another delegation requested information on whether recommendations regarding the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) were covered in the report.

44. The Associate Administrator stated that the comments of delegations had been noted. Information would be provided as early as possible on the outcome of the investigation regarding the Reserve for Field Accommodation. In response to another query raised, he noted that UNDP had begun thematic evaluations on sustainability, capacity-building and cost-effectiveness. The concepts would be tested in three pilot countries during 1998. The standards of government capacity for managing national execution would be included in the revised guidelines, expected to be issued in early 1998. Information would be shared with the Executive Board on how the standards for national execution capacity were to be applied, including a briefing for delegations on the subject when the guidelines were issued. In response to a query raised, he informed the Board that four regional workshops on monitoring and evaluation had been conducted, in Addis Ababa, Buenos Aires, Kuala Lumpur, and Prague, and two workshops were planned for 1998, in Lebanon and Morocco. He noted that UNDP had frequent opportunities for dialogue with the Board of Auditors. The Associate Administrator explained that since the United Nations reforms had been put in place, all operational funds and programmes were now part of the Development Group, and as a result there had been closer relations in all aspects of their activities.

45. The Director of the Division for Administrative and Information Services stated that the revised internal control framework would provide strengthened internal controls and address breakdowns.

46. The Director of the Office of Audit and Performance Review (OAPR) stated that the investigations into the Reserve for Field Accommodation should be concluded in the near future. He noted that the Office had worked extensively with the Board of Auditors on national execution, in order to avoid an audit qualification. Many meetings had been held with the Board of Auditors and OAPR in continuous dialogue. In response to the query raised, he noted that an internal audit report on UNV had just been completed. He informed the Board that while UNDP did not normally discuss internal audit reports at the Executive Board, he could report that UNV had recently made significant improvements in its financial controls and that a detailed action plan had been worked out with regard to the recommendations of the audit report.

47. The Executive Board took note of the UNDP report on the follow-up to the recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (DP/1998/4).

B. United Nations Population Fund

48. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked the President of the Executive Board for the opportunity to introduce the report on follow-up to the report of the Board of Auditors for 1994-1995: status of implementation of recommendations (DP/FPA/1998/1). He then highlighted progress made in areas of concern to UNFPA management, including national execution, Technical Support Services (TSS) arrangements, and the management of consultancies. He noted that the Fund had completed an independent evaluation of execution modalities, including national execution. The evaluation stressed the need for UNFPA to assess more carefully a wide range of technical and managerial skills that were relevant to successful project execution. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) went on to note that the Fund had completed revision of its programming guidelines and had introduced a programming process that was based on the Country Population Assessment, a national strategic exercise with emphasis on capacity-building, and the logical framework approach at the programme and project level. This revised programming process addressed such concerns of the Board of Auditors as the need for setting out clear quantitative and qualitative objectives for the Fund's projects and programmes.

49. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) pointed out that UNFPA had also introduced significant improvements in the management of the TSS system, including the issuance of revised TSS guidelines and the enhanced coordination of TSS-related activities within the Fund. Regarding the selection and use of consultants, he noted that UNFPA management had constituted an interdivisional working group to review findings of the Board of Auditors in this area. The recommendations of the working group, including ways to improve recruitment and evaluation procedures, had been approved and the necessary actions were being undertaken for implementation. In closing, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) assured the Executive Board members that UNFPA remained strongly committed to effective follow-up to the issues raised by the Board of Auditors and to the continued improvement of the Fund's management capacity.

50. One delegation, speaking also on behalf of three others, noted its satisfaction with the quality of the document and the clarity of the responses. However, it was disappointed that the new guidelines on the selection and assessment of institutions for national project execution were not yet available. It had hoped that the thematic evaluation of execution modalities, including national execution, would have been made available. The same delegation expressed interest in seeing a summary of the conclusions of the thematic evaluation. Another delegation noted that in relation to national execution, it considered the systematic assessment of country needs to be critical. It fully supported the revised arrangements for the programming process, including the Country Population Assessment, the logical framework and the initiative on indicators. The delegation supported the UNFPA initiative in developing indicators to assess progress in achieving conference goals and requested information on collaboration with other agencies in the context of the United Nations Development Group in developing and applying indicators. It also requested information on the Fund's study of the absorptive capacity of programme countries, particularly with regard to national execution. It

reiterated the importance of national consultants in the TSS arrangement as part of capacity-building efforts in programme countries. The same delegation noted its continued support for the Fund's interregional programmes, with a particular emphasis on South-South cooperation, and requested information, as early as available, on the guidelines for interregional programming.

51. Another delegation stated that along with other delegations it fully supported national execution where it was possible, keeping in mind the absorptive capacity of local implementing institutions. It recommended that the Fund continue to give high priority to enhancing capacity at the local level for more effective programme implementation. The delegation noted that it looked forward to the study on absorptive capacity and the utilization of financial resources among recipient countries, particularly in Africa, and hoped that the study would identify not only constraints but also the concrete steps that UNFPA would take to address those constraints. The same delegation expressed concern that the thematic evaluation of execution modalities appeared to be a broad assessment of the effectiveness of executing agencies, while the intention of the audit report was that the issue of execution modalities be addressed carefully at the country level. It noted that the Fund might wish to comment on other ways that this important audit recommendation could be addressed. With regard to TSS, the delegation noted that some staff at cooperating agency headquarters were underutilized and that efforts should be made to strengthen their role or to relocate them in order to make better use of their expertise. The delegation asked whether the guidance disseminated in 1996 regarding the preparation of terms of reference for consultants had resulted in any improvements and if the names of local consultants were being added to the roster of international consultants. It also asked whether the findings of the UNFPA working group on management of Special Service Agreements could be made available to interested members of the Executive Board.

52. One delegation expressed concern that there had been three instances of negative balances concerning trust funds. It asked which cases had been resolved and which funding modality had been used. Another delegation noted its appreciation for the format of the report, which presented information very clearly. It sought information on the extent to which new procedures alluded to in the report had been operationalized. One delegation stated that it attached great importance to the development of indicators for capacity-building and asked when it could receive information on their utilization.

53. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked delegations for their comments and encouraging remarks. In responding to various questions from the floor, he noted that the thematic evaluation of execution modalities would be reported on at the annual session 1998 of the Executive Board. He stated that UNFPA was collaborating with other agencies and strongly supported the United Nations Development Group process. The Fund would also continue to promote South-South cooperation. With regard to the better utilization of TSS expertise, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) noted that efforts were under way to consolidate and streamline these arrangements at agency headquarters and to continue to maximize effectiveness of TSS and the Country Support Teams. With reference to the recruitment and deployment of consultants, he observed that the new procedures had helped to improve the administrative process and to reduce delays. He added

that local consultants were being utilized to a much greater extent and their names would be put on the international roster when they were deployed. Also, country offices maintained their own rosters of national consultants. On the subject of developing global indicators for absorptive capacity and capacity-building, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) noted that this involved a conceptual issue and that in his view these indicators should be country-specific. He mentioned that the thematic evaluation was based on experiences in eight programme countries. He added that the Fund would review relevant studies and findings in the area of capacity-building and absorptive capacity. With regard to trust fund activities, he pointed out that two of the three cases of negative balance were due to miscoding. Only in one case had funds been expended before receipt; this had been due to currency fluctuations. He assured delegations that the Fund would continue to strengthen its internal controls related to trust fund management.

54. The Executive Board took note of the UNFPA report on follow-up to the report of the Board of Auditors for 1994-1995: status of implementation of recommendations (DP/FPA/1998/1).

UNFPA SEGMENT

55. Before moving to consideration of the agenda item on UNFPA country programmes, the Executive Director of UNFPA made a brief introductory statement. She thanked the outgoing President and other members of the Bureau for their help and support during 1997. She congratulated the incoming President and other Bureau members on their election and assured them of the full support and cooperation of UNFPA. She then updated the Executive Board on a number of important developments that had taken place since its third regular session 1997. The Executive Director highlighted recent developments on the ICPD + 5 process that had been initiated with the strong support of the Executive Board at its annual session 1997 (see decision 97/14). Subsequently, in its resolution 1997/42 of 22 July 1997, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the Executive Board's decision and referred the matter to the General Assembly. She noted that UNFPA was particularly pleased with General Assembly resolution 52/188 of 18 December 1997, which supported the plans the Fund had outlined for an operational review, from the present time until 1999, of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and authorized the holding of a Special Session of the General Assembly in 1999. The review process included a series of round-table meetings, and UNFPA was already working with the Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, on shared arrangements. She underscored that a participatory process would ensure the involvement of all parties.

56. The Executive Director recounted the current financial situation of UNFPA and noted that once the 1997 accounts were finalized, the Fund's regular resources income was expected to top $291 million, which, together with multi-bilateral resources, would bring the Fund's total income in 1997 to $319 million. She extended special thanks to the Governments of Denmark, France, Finland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom for their additional contributions and commitment to the work of UNFPA. She was very encouraged by the recent decision of the Government of Japan to continue its

present level of assistance, despite difficult budgetary constraints. Other major donors had also indicated that they would either increase or maintain their levels of support. As a result, UNFPA projected a regular resources income of around $300 million for 1998. The Executive Director added that there had also been some positive developments in private sector fund-raising. She concluded by noting that the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and UNFPA had made progress in reviewing the draft terms of reference of the Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH) and in discussing various substantive issues that would be taken up at the first meeting of CCH, to be convened in early May 1998.

III. UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

57. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) introduced the five country programmes and one subregional programme before the Executive Board: Assistance to the Government of Algeria (DP/FPA/CP/199); Assistance to the Government of China (DP/FPA/CP/196); Assistance to the Government of Egypt (DP/FPA/CP/198); Assistance to the Government of Nicaragua (DP/FPA/CP/197); Assistance to the Government of Paraguay (DP/FPA/CP/195); and Assistance to the Pacific subregion (DP/FPA/CP/200). She noted that the Fund had completed revision of the core programme guidelines and many staff had already been trained on the new guidelines, including the application of the logical framework techniques. The six programmes before the Executive Board reflected the broad range and diversity of population situations in three different regions of the world. She observed that the proposed programme for China was in line with the principles of the Programme of Action of ICPD and would assist the Government in developing a comprehensive reproductive health programme by focusing interventions in selected counties, from which lessons could be learned for application nationally. The programme would aim to improve quality and choice. Activities would also be undertaken to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women.

58. With regard to the Pacific subregion, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted that there was great diversity among the 14 countries covered by the proposed programme, hence a variety of approaches would be utilized to address country-specific as well as regional needs. The majority of women in the subregion lacked access to adequate health care, higher education and employment opportunities. Except for Fiji, the countries in the Melanesian group had high rates of maternal mortality, teenage pregnancies and population growth. The proposed programme would address these challenges. The proposed programme for Egypt would assist the Government to provide high-quality reproductive health and family planning services, with special attention to the needs of women and youth. There would be a focus on priority districts where indicators were significantly below national averages. Advocacy and information, education and communication (IEC) activities would be undertaken at the national level to promote reproductive health and reproductive rights and to enhance the status of women. The proposed programme for Algeria aimed at improving access to integrated reproductive health services and at strengthening national capacities to manage reproductive health programmes. This would be achieved through broadening the scope of services, providing training, and

expanding the mix of contraceptive methods. A communication strategy targeting women of reproductive age, men in rural areas and youth would also be supported.

59. One of the major priorities of the proposed country programme for Nicaragua would be to address the reproductive health needs of adolescents. The programme would aim at increasing the availability of reproductive health services in impoverished areas and would also seek to improve the capacity for integrating population issues in poverty alleviation and sustainable development efforts. The country programme for Paraguay would focus on providing assistance to increase contraceptive prevalence and reduce maternal mortality. The programme would aim to build national capacity for the delivery of high-quality reproductive health services, particularly to adolescents. Major components of the programme would include sex education and male involvement in reproductive health through new partnerships with the armed forces, organized labour and the private sector. Support would also be provided for advocacy and activities to create awareness of population issues.

60. The Executive Board approved the six UNFPA programmes. Most of the delegations focused their comments and questions on the proposed programme for China. Some delegations inquired about the programmes proposed for Algeria, Egypt, Nicaragua, and the Pacific subregion.

61. The delegation of the People's Republic of China thanked the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) for her introduction and noted that the new programme for China had been formulated in line with the principles of the ICPD Programme of Action and resulted from three years of consultations between UNFPA and entities in China. The delegation stated that the programme would focus on delivering reproductive health and family planning services to women in impoverished regions to improve their condition and to enable them to enjoy rights to various services. In China, 58 million people were still living below the poverty line, with social indicators in impoverished areas being lower than the national averages. The new programme had been designed precisely to provide assistance to women in these areas. To ensure that the programme would be well-focused, members of the Executive Board undertook two field trips to the relevant provinces in China. In February 1996, representatives from 11 members of the Executive Board visited Shanxi and Gansu provinces. Later, in November 1997, representatives from 17 members of the Executive Board undertook observation trips to Xiangyun and Xinping counties in Yunnan province. After having visited the provinces and seen the poverty and needs evident in the counties, the representatives had expressed their support for the UNFPA programme of assistance and had noted that they would report back to their authorities in their capitals on what they had seen. The delegation of China thanked the Executive Board members for their concern and hoped that the new programme would be supported.

62. In general, delegations expressed strong support for the proposed **China** country programme, noting in particular that it was in line with the principles of the Programme of Action of ICPD. Several delegations welcomed the programme's focus on delivering comprehensive client-oriented reproductive health services in 32 selected counties from which lessons could be drawn for application at the national level.

63. One delegation described the programme as a bold attempt to turn ICPD principles into a reality and welcomed the attention that would be given to social marketing of contraceptives and to addressing the needs of adolescents for reproductive health information and services, as well as to promoting male involvement and quality of care. The same delegation asked how the lessons learned would be disseminated in China and elsewhere, and emphasized that the programme should be closely monitored and evaluated. The delegation also asked how UNFPA would judge the success of the programme.

64. Another delegation, speaking also on behalf of two other delegations, remarked on significant elements of the programme, namely, the emphasis on meeting women's needs and on voluntary choice.

65. One delegation, also speaking on behalf of another, called the programme exemplary and underlined its focus on qualitative aspects and women's empowerment. The same delegation welcomed the references to the review and evaluation of the programme and hoped that the Government of China would again organize field visits for Executive Board members to project sites.

66. Several delegations welcomed the plans for systematic monitoring and evaluation of the China programme and underscored the need to ensure free and voluntary choice, in keeping with ICPD principles, particularly, the cardinal principle of non-coercion. Some delegations emphasized that independent evaluations should be undertaken to ensure objectivity. One delegation stated that since this was a pilot project, evaluation was very important for its further expansion.

67. Another delegation, while observing that participatory development was essential for programme success, emphasized the importance of ensuring the commitment and involvement of local authorities and independent monitoring and evaluation. The same delegation also commended UNFPA for its work in China. Noting the value of the field visits, the delegation pointed out that, in the future, sufficient notice should be provided by the Fund so that delegations might fully participate in and benefit from such visits.

68. One delegation noted that it had long opposed a new programme in China and that current legislation in that delegation's country required it to reduce its voluntary contribution to UNFPA if the programme proceeded in China. While recognizing China's serious population problem and the importance of family planning to the country's development, the delegation expressed its deep concern over elements of China's family planning policy that were antithetical to the consensus achieved at ICPD. The delegation asked the Executive Director for confirmation on five specific points: (a) that project counties were selected on the basis of the commitment of the leadership in those counties to the principles of ICPD, and that that commitment would be obtained in writing; (b) that UNFPA would disburse funds contingent on the removal or suspension of birth quotas and targets in project counties, also applying that principle to project counties in which legal or administrative penalties based on family planning regulations remained in effect; (c) that mechanisms be in place to prevent or detect coercive practices in counties receiving UNFPA assistance, including regular reports on implementation and frequent and rigorous monitoring visits to be undertaken by both UNFPA and independent consultants; (d) that all

project counties be open to monitoring and evaluation visits by representatives of members of the Executive Board; and (e) that UNFPA suspend operations in project counties found to be in violation of programme guidelines, and report such violations to the Executive Board if they were not corrected. The delegation concluded by stating that with those assurances it believed that the programme might have the potential to demonstrate clearly the efficacy and sustainability of voluntary, non-coercive family planning.

69. Two delegations asked the Executive Director to report regularly to the Executive Board on significant elements of the programmes, including progress in meeting the principles and goals of ICPD.

70. The delegation of China expressed its thanks to all delegations for their support. Noting its appreciation for UNFPA support and effective cooperation, the delegation stated that the proposed programme was the result of three years of consultation between the Fund and entities in China. Formulated in keeping with ICPD principles, the programme would focus on delivering reproductive health and family planning services to women in impoverished regions. The delegation reiterated that there were still 58 million people living in poverty in China and the new programme would provide assistance to people in impoverished and underserved areas where social and health indicators were below the national averages. During the previous year, the UNFPA Country Support Team had visited China to assist in compiling project documents and to establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the programme. The delegation of China drew attention to the challenge of rapid population growth that China had faced and would continue to face for years. If the excessive growth of population could not be effectively stabilized, the deterioration of the ecology and environment for dozens of years to come would be unavoidable, thus endangering the basic survival conditions of most of the Chinese people and China's socio-economic sustainable development. Owing to the huge population base, China's annual net population growth was still around 13 million despite the implementation of the family planning programme. The delegation went on to note the positive impact of family planning on the country's development and pointed out that, thanks to the support and understanding of the Chinese people, about 300 million births had been averted since the family planning programme started in the 1970s, constituting an important contribution to the global goal of stabilizing the world's population. Without the full understanding and support of the people, the 300 million fewer births over the last 20 years would not have been achieved.

71. Two delegations commented on the **Algeria** country programme. The delegation of Algeria warmly thanked UNFPA for formulating a good programme that would meet the reproductive health and family planning needs of the people. The delegation noted that two corrections should be made in the document: in paragraph 5 the median size of each household should be 7.6 and not 9.6, and in paragraph 6 the contraceptive prevalence rate should be 57 per cent and not 47 per cent. The same delegation added that it was a time-saving and good innovation for the Executive Board to consider all six programmes as a package. Another delegation stated that it attached great importance to the continued presence of UNFPA and other United Nations agencies in Algeria. The delegation went on to underscore the importance of having a policy to consolidate the gains achieved for women in the area of gender equality and equity (alluded to in paragraph 13 of the

proposed programme). The delegation also stressed the need to provide training to national personnel.

72. The delegation of Nicaragua expressed its appreciation for the proposed programme for **Nicaragua** and stated that it responded to the needs of the people and the policies of the Government. The programme would help to eradicate poverty, reduce maternal mortality and improve the health of adolescents. Another delegation noted that although ambitious, the proposed programme suited the needs of the people. It went on to ask why there was such a high percentage of female sterilizations in Nicaragua when simpler, user-ready contraceptive methods were available. Another delegation enquired about the extent of cooperation with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), which had a subregional project on reproductive health.

73. The delegation of Egypt stated that it attached great importance to the issue of population, as was reflected in the proposed country programme for **Egypt**. While confirming its continued and full cooperation, the delegation went on to express its deep appreciation for the work of UNFPA. Another delegation complimented UNFPA on the substance of the programme and noted that it was a positive development that the programme would be extended to disadvantaged groups and regions outside Cairo. It was also pleased to note that special attention would be focused on women and youth and on mainstreaming gender, including through integrated community development schemes focusing on literacy programmes, provision of micro-credits, nutritional support and gender training. The same delegation asked whether some of the projects would be implemented outside the Ministry of Health and Population, for example, by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It also asked how UNFPA planned to reconcile the various reproductive health programme strategies of different donors in the country.

74. With regard to the subregional programme for the **Pacific** one delegation expressed concern that aid was declining at a time when the population of most States in the subregion was projected to increase by between 25 and 50 per cent by the year 2010. Noting that the proposed programme showed a decline in funds compared to earlier UNFPA programmes of assistance, the delegation hoped that by mid-point in the programme there would be an opportunity to increase financial assistance. Another delegation, while appreciating UNFPA consultations, planning and programme assistance in all programme countries, noted that the Fund should conduct a more collaborative dialogue with the South Pacific Commission and should expand its consultations both with Governments and donors in the area. The delegation observed that programme implementation had been slower than preferred and that reporting needed to be improved. It underscored the importance of effective monitoring and evaluation and compliance with all UNFPA guidelines.

75. In her response, the Executive Director thanked all delegations for their support of the six programmes. She noted that the proposed country programme for **China** was the result of three years of consultations and negotiations between the Government and the Fund. She emphasized that the programme illustrated the desire of the Government to implement not just the ICPD Programme of Action but also the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Executive Director stated that the provincial governments and local leadership would announce that there would be no quotas or

targets in the programme counties and that this would be written in all the project documents. She took note of the point that the issue of administrative and legal penalties should be addressed and informed delegations that this subject had been discussed with authorities in the country. She stressed that the proposed programme was based on full and informed choice and was intended to show the benefits and effectiveness of a voluntary approach. Based on the lessons learned, the approach would later be expanded throughout the country. The Executive Director noted that the Fund and the Government would jointly monitor the programme and there would be independent evaluations. She stated that in the unlikely event of a return to quotas in any of the project counties, the Fund would investigate the situation and notify the Executive Board, as it would under similar circumstances in any programme country. She added that she would be pleased to regularly report to the Executive Board on significant elements of the six programmes, including progress in meeting the principles and goals of the Programme of Action of ICPD.

76. With regard to lessons learned, the Executive Director observed that each year data would be collected, and quality indicators would be monitored by both UNFPA staff and independent consultants. Seminars and workshops would be organized to disseminate the lessons learned, including to other counties and provinces. The Executive Director pointed out that the proposed programme drew on the experience gained during the Fund's earlier programme of assistance to China. The success of earlier UNFPA programmes had been written up and had also been drawn on by the World Bank. She added that the Government of China was open to field visits and that the Fund would help to arrange these. She assured delegations that efforts would be made to provide adequate notice of such field visits. On the subject of the data given in the proposed programme for Algeria, she noted that obtaining timely and accurate data was often a problem and that more effort was required in this area. She hoped that as follow-up to the Administrative Committee on Coordination Task Force on Basic Social Services for All and through other mechanisms of the United Nations Development Group reliable and timely data would become available.

77. The Director, Asia and the Pacific Division, noted the commitment of the authorities in China to the principles of the Programme of Action of ICPD and added that the proposed programme had built-in community participation, including at the grass-roots level. With regard to the subregional programme for the **Pacific**, he stated that while the earlier programme had provided assistance in the amount of $2.6 million per year, the new programme would provide $2.5 million per year, based on the Fund's new approach of programme resource allocation, as approved by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1996 (see decision 96/15). The programme had built in $2.8 million in multi-bilateral resources. Responding to the earlier comment on consultations with the South Pacific Commission, he noted that as a result of staff transfers, there had been some slowness in that regard, but recently regular contacts had been resumed and had resulted, in December 1997, in all 14 countries in the subregion agreeing to a common questionnaire and methodology for their respective censuses.

78. The Director, Latin America and the Caribbean Division, responding to the question regarding the high percentage of female sterilizations in **Nicaragua**, noted that it clearly demonstrated insufficient coverage in the provision of

reproductive health and family planning services. She stated that if women had access to other contraceptive methods, they would use them. Frequently, in rural areas women had seven children before undergoing sterilization. UNFPA was financing an NGO to research the issue of the high rate of female sterilizations and the results of the research would be disseminated. She assured delegations that collaboration with PAHO and other organizations would be undertaken at the local level.

79. The Officer-in-Charge of the Division for Arab States and Europe stated that in **Egypt** the Fund was working with the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) partners and donors to promote gender-mainstreaming in all government plans and strategies, including the incorporation of gender and reproductive health concepts in the new population and settlement schemes. Under the proposed programme, joint and complementary activities would be undertaken with donors. Following ICPD, the Government and NGOs were working together closely. Of particular interest was the strategic plan of action of the Ministry of Health and Population, which focused on the improvement of the quality of care and encompassed NGOs as integral partners in the plan. Also, UNFPA, along with other donors, was supporting an umbrella mechanism (the NGO Commission for Population and Development) to strengthen the capacity of grass-roots NGOs working in the areas of population and gender, to enable them to become partners in implementation of the national population and health programme.

80. The Executive Board approved the following country and subregional programmes: Paraguay (DP/FPA/CP/195); China (DP/FPA/CP/196); Nicaragua (DP/FPA/CP/197); Egypt (DP/FPA/CP/198); Algeria (DP/FPA/CP/199); and the Pacific subregion (DP/FPA/CP/200); and requested the Executive Director to report regularly to the Executive Board on the implementation of significant elements of the above programmes, including progress in meeting the principles and goals of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

81. Following the adoption of the decision, the delegation of Japan took the floor to note its appreciation for the warm recognition of its Government's support by the Executive Director. It welcomed regular reporting to the Executive Board and noted that the field trips to programme countries were very valuable. The delegation encouraged the Fund to keep Executive Board members informed of the dates of future Country Population Assessment missions.

UNDP SEGMENT

IV. UNDP 2001

Update on UNDP 2001 implementation

82. The Administrator gave an oral progress report on the status of the implementation of UNDP 2001. His presentation concentrated on three areas: strengthening country offices; working on efficiency and process re-engineering; and transforming UNDP into a learning organization.

83. He explained that the new corporate structure of UNDP brought together planning and all resource management into one bureau. The authority to recruit medium- and longer-term consultants at the country level had been decentralized to country offices. The Operations Support Group helped the Associate Administrator in coordinating the work of the regional bureaux. The Group had helped to unblock certain issues, such as the revision of guidelines on national execution. Also, a new simplified programming manual would be released on CD-ROM in early 1998.

84. A senior management retreat had been convened in October 1998 to focus on the specific responsibilities for implementation and supporting country offices. The meeting was used to identify which unit was responsible for different aspects of the change implementation plan and to integrate those aspects into compacts, one of the main tools to be used to streamline the organization for better efficiency and effectiveness. The compacts identified critical initiatives for which managers would be held responsible and established measurable success indicators. Signed between bureau or unit directors and the Administrator, and between regional directors with resident representatives on country office delivery, programme impact and staff management, the compacts would become the basis of the new UNDP corporate plan.

85. He drew the attention of the Executive Board to a work published by UNDP and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency on the experiences of different organizations in the area of performance measurement, entitled Measuring and Managing Results: Lessons for Development Cooperation.

86. The Administrator explained that the implementation of the accountability framework rested on training audit staff and managers in the techniques of assessing and controlling risks and that such training would soon begin. The first set of subregional resource facilities (SURFs) was being established - in Lebanon, Pakistan, the Slovak Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Zimbabwe. UNDP was working to focus further its sustainable human development framework. A mechanism for the implementation of change was the expanded Executive Committee, the senior policy body of UNDP, which now included the participation of ten resident representatives twice a year.

87. He thanked the donor countries that had contributed funds for change at UNDP, in particular the Governments of Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

88. In conclusion, he stated that the learning experiences of change management would be shared in the Change Resource Guide, to be posted on the Intranet. The Guide would provide a continuing opportunity for country offices to exchange experiences on how UNDP could become a development organization so recognized for its focus, effectiveness and efficiency that it continued to earn the trust of its partners and to grow. He recognized the excellent work of the UNDP staff, many of whom toiled in difficult conditions.

89. One delegation commented that progress in change management was becoming more tangible through decentralization and enhancing country programmes. Performance measurement through development of criteria, especially at the country level, was needed.

90. Another delegation, whose Government had provided assistance to change management, stated that change management needed to demonstrate greater impact, in particular at the country level. Support was expressed for the broader role of evaluation activities. Bilateral discussions on performance indicators would be welcomed.

91. A written progress report on change management was requested, including a brief summary outlining the change management programme, future plans and an assessment of progress.

92. The move to greater accountability was welcomed. It was proposed that a staff representative participate in the discussion of change management at the third regular session 1998.

93. The Administrator thanked the speakers for their support. He informed the Executive Board that a written progress report on change management would be submitted at the annual session 1998. Overall United Nations reform would be integrated into UNDP change management. He noted that performance indicators were being developed. One of the main focuses of the indicators was to determine the development impact measured at the country level. UNDP was working with development partners on performance measures. UNDP would identify challenges to implementing change management in future reports, as suggested by one delegation.

94. The Executive Board took note of the oral progress report of the Administrator on change management.

Programme focus

95. The Administrator made brief introductory remarks on the item.

96. The Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Development Policy introduced the report of the Administrator on narrowing the focus (DP/1998/5).

97. Many delegations welcomed the document, the opening remarks and the consultation process that had led to the consideration of the item by the Executive Board. While there was general support for the advances made in narrowing the programme focus, some delegations expressed the view that particular emphasis needed to be given to demonstrating how the narrowed focus would be implemented.

98. The institution of guiding principles on focus, as elaborated in document DP/1998/5, was generally welcomed. Some speakers underlined the need for those principles to be applied to core and non-core activities. Several delegations emphasized the need for the country, regional and global cooperation frameworks to demonstrate adherence to the guiding principles. One delegation suggested that each country cooperation framework (CCF) include four to six service areas where impact could be demonstrated. Another delegation stated that adherence to all of the guiding principles could be difficult and that some could be undertaken in accordance with the country situation.

99. The Executive Board discussed the identification of core development services contained in document DP/1998/5. Many speakers underlined the need to link those services to the demands of programme countries, ensuring country specificity. It was generally agreed that the core development services outlined in the document constituted an indicative list, which would evolve over time.

100. Speakers cited the need for UNDP to remain committed to its work in poverty eradication, in particular in low-income countries, and within that overall goal, its main focus areas. The comparative advantages of UNDP in development cooperation were noted by many delegations, with some underlining the need for UNDP to have a clearer profile. As the nature of development cooperation was evolving, UNDP had to continue to strengthen its niche within a normative framework, including the follow-up to United Nations conferences, and with the inevitable phasing-out of some programmes. Duplication must be avoided. In addition, UNDP must be able to respond flexibly in special circumstances with a catalytic and innovative role. Several speakers urged UNDP to continue its fine-tuning of programme focus in the years ahead. Others warned against focusing too narrowly and possibly limiting UNDP cooperation with programme countries.

101. Some speakers emphasized the key role of UNDP in overall United Nations reform operational activities, citing the introduction of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as a useful tool for coordination at the country level. The need for UNDP to publicize its achievements was underlined.

102. One delegation stressed the need to build staff capacity for work in the main focus areas. The Administrator's intention to issue a directive on operationalizing the focus paper to country offices was welcomed.

103. Several delegations requested clarification on aspects of the paper. One queried how UNDP would complement the work of other United Nations organizations and that of the World Bank. One delegation urged UNDP to cooperate with the specialized agencies at an early stage of project preparation. A query was raised on how the guiding principles in the paper would be operationalized, including whether they would be applied in CCFs already approved.

104. Other queries were raised regarding the role of UNDP in relation to the Commission on Sustainable Development discussions in 1998 on water and with regard to debt problems of programme countries. Some delegations expressed support for UNDP interventions in promoting trade and investment in least developed countries.

105. The Administrator noted that a consultative process had led to the drafting of the document and that the comments of delegations at the present session had been noted. In responding to some comments that the paper did not adequately address how focus would be achieved, he underlined that narrowing the focus took place at the country level with strategies varying from country to country. There would be increased focus in the CCFs. He noted that ensuring programme focus was a process, and in a large organization it took some time to achieve results. With regard to existing CCFs, the guiding principles on focus had been

incorporated to some extent through the preliminary in-house review process. The triennial policy review of operational activities in 1998 would also provide an opportunity to sharpen programme focus. In response to a query, he noted that UNDP was providing increasing support to national poverty assessments. In addition, a framework for United Nations system action for poverty eradication, which would give further cohesion to work in that area, was under discussion in the United Nations Development Group. The need for flexibility was noted. He stated that the list of core development services was not restrictive but rather one that indicated specific areas of competence where UNDP could offer quality support. He noted that there was a subset of special areas where UNDP would like to maintain expertise, for example, in food security, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Narrowing the list to 20 areas had already constituted a major step forward. The Administrator emphasized the progress made to date since the end of the fifth programming cycle: UNDP was much stronger and more focused. The next steps to be taken were in communicating the messages regarding focus and in operationalizing the guidelines.

106. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau of Planning and Resource Management stated that staff competencies would be sharpened in the context of enhanced programme focus. Staff competency models were being developed. In that regard, new performance measures would be introduced, managerial capacity would be strengthened, and training provided.

107. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy stated that while the multidimensionality of poverty called for the existing range of development services, specific strategies would be identified and through the analysis of poverty at the country level, focus would thus be achieved. The list of core development services would evolve over time in response to changing situations. She underlined that the first guiding principle, on national ownership, was an overriding one, and should meet concerns delegations had about the second principle. She confirmed that the guiding principles applied to core and non-core funding and to the country, regional and global cooperation frameworks. Some guiding principles were already being applied and operationalization was taking place through existing processes of programme formulation, reviews and allocation of funds. It was an ongoing process. She looked forward to continued consultations with the Executive Board in the future.

108. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

98/1. Narrowing the focus of United Nations Development Programme interventions

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on narrowing the focus (DP/1998/5) and the comments made thereon;

2. Reaffirms that assistance to programme countries in their endeavour to realize sustainable human development, in line with their national development

programmes and priorities, should remain the highest priority of the United Nations Development Programme, and that this assistance should be responsive and flexible, and must be based on the development plans and priorities of the programme countries and on the priorities set by the Executive Board;

3. Reaffirms the neutrality, multilateralism and universality of the United Nations Development Programme;

4. Emphasizes that coherence and focus is necessary to achieve the objectives of impact, sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations Development Programme interventions at the country level; and that the adoption of the programme approach should lead to fewer and larger interventions while allowing the Programme to assist programme countries in launching and piloting innovative projects;

5. Requests the United Nations Development Programme to develop further its expertise in providing capacity development assistance to programme countries in their pursuit of poverty eradication and their promotion of people's participation in development;

6. Underlines that a clear profile of the United Nations Development Programme role in each individual programme country and at the global level will facilitate the resource mobilization efforts of the Programme;

7. Recognizes the ongoing effort within the United Nations Development Programme to identify an indicative list of core development services;

8. Requests the United Nations Development Programme to cooperate to the maximum extent possible with all actors in the field of development cooperation, in particular the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, in order to foster synergies, avoid duplication and make optimal use of available resources;

9. Endorses on this basis the guiding principles contained in paragraphs 20 to 40 of document DP/1998/5;

10. Decides that the guiding principles should be applied to all country, regional and global cooperation frameworks as well as to sub-elements of these frameworks, taking into account the specific conditions of programme countries, whether funded from core resources or non-core resources;

11. Requests the Administrator to operationalize the guiding principles, including a mechanism for implementation, impact measurement and evaluation, and to incorporate the guiding principles into the new programming manual of the United Nations Development Programme;

12. Requests the Administrator to ensure that all future presentations to the Executive Board of country, regional and global cooperation frameworks, beginning at the first regular session in 1999, as well as reviews and evaluations of these frameworks, are structured in a manner that clearly describes how each of the guiding principles are applied;

13. Requests the Administrator to report at its annual session 2000 on all aspects of progress in the operationalization of the guiding principles, including the mechanism for implementation, impact measurement and evaluation.

23 January 1998

V. COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

A. Country cooperation frameworks

109. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for Algeria (DP/CCF/ALG/1), Cape Verde (DP/CCF/CVI/1), the Cook Islands (DP/CCF/CKI/1), Ghana (DP/CCF/GHA/1), Guatemala (DP/CCF/GUA/1), the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (DP/CCF/LIB/1), Nicaragua (DP/CCF/NIC/1), the Republic of Korea (DP/CCF/ROK/1), and Tokelau (DP/CCF/TOK/1). The Executive Board also approved the second extension of the sixth country programme for Kenya (DP/CP/KEN/6/EXTENSION II).

110. In accordance with a written request from seven members of the Executive Board, the Board discussed the first CCF for Mozambique.

First country cooperation framework for Mozambique (DP/CCF/MOZ/1)

111. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the first CCF for Mozambique (DP/CCF/MOZ/1), highlighting the main features of the framework. She noted that Mozambique, as one of the pilot United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) countries, had been able to move beyond the CCF and other United Nations agency country programme documents to consolidate and rationalize United Nations development cooperation. The CCF had been used as part of the UNDAF process to guide the country management team and structure system-wide strategic objectives under which UNDP programming priorities fell.

112. The representative of Mozambique stated that the CCF embodied the end product of the collective work of all stakeholders: UNDP, government institutions, cooperating partners and civil society. In developing the CCF, the role of government institutions had been mostly in defining priorities, ascertaining the needed coordination and maintaining intensive consultations with the UNDP country office. The methodology adopted was that of the programme approach and national execution, with a view to strengthening ownership through capacity-building. The programme would support the transition of the Government from war to peace, emergency to rehabilitation and development, a single party system to a multi-party election system, and instability to stability. Under the CCF, the Government, with all its partners, including the United Nations system, would be able to ensure that UNDP resources had a positive impact on the development efforts of Mozambique and its people.

113. Many delegations spoke of the CCF as a good example of UNDP work in the area of transition from an emergency and post-conflict situation to rehabilitation and development. They raised the following issues for discussion - the focus and concentration areas of the CCF; coordination;

decentralization with accountability; evaluation and monitoring; programme delivery; poverty eradication; harmonization; good governance; the comparative advantage of UNDP; agency collaboration, especially in terms of UNDAF; regional cooperation; and UNDP core and non-core resources mobilization and utilization.

114. Several delegations emphasized the importance of concentrating the programme on a few, carefully selected focus areas, to ensure the necessary impact. The description of work planned in those areas, for example, UNDP interventions in the area of poverty eradication, could then have been better articulated in the document. The comparative advantage of UNDP vis-à-vis other agencies with programmes in Mozambique, notably the Bretton Woods institutions and other United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization, could have been specified more clearly. The potential of UNDAF to help define the roles of the various agencies was recognized.

115. Delegations observed that accountability for the relatively large programme in Mozambique, especially for those activities funded by non-core resources, should be ensured through adequate monitoring, evaluation, assessment and reporting. Representatives of some delegations said they would like to see UNDP play a greater role in strengthening good governance and in supporting public sector reform as well as strategic policy discussions. One delegation noted that, in view of the fact that the CCF indicated that a large proportion of technical cooperation was required, it would be good to have an annex that contained a summary of the state of programme delivery, with a breakdown of programme resources as well as an indication of the nature of financing. This would apply not only to the CCF for Mozambique, but to all frameworks.

116. Some delegations also drew attention to the importance of cross-cutting issues, such as the environment, HIV/AIDS and gender. Other delegations stated that Mozambique was a focus or priority country for their Governments' bilateral aid cooperation. A stronger and more active role for UNDP in helping to further improve donor coordination was also advocated. The concept of "smart partnerships" between all parties involved in the development, implementation and management of programme activities was welcomed.

117. The importance of regional cooperation and collaboration with subregional institutions was emphasized, for instance to help the Southern African Development Community to strengthen the integration of regional markets, and to take advantage of projects in which rapid and substantive results could be achieved.

118. The Director-General of Multilateral Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mozambique reiterated that the CCF was the product of a collaborative effort of a wide range of partners. He noted that it was important to recognize the need for better focus in the programme, as well as to address the issues of evaluation, national execution, the role of technical cooperation and its costs, the use of and reporting on non-core resources, and public sector reform. The best occasions to measure and evaluate programme implementation, among other things, would be during the annual and mid-term reviews.

119. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa and the Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Mozambique also responded to the issues raised in the discussion. They noted that thematic working groups, efforts to strengthen and focus the resident coordinator system and UNDAF were examples of the many modalities in place to ensure a well-coordinated and participatory approach to all programmes and projects within the framework. They assured the Executive Board that careful note had been taken of the views expressed by all delegations. These would be taken fully into account in the preparation of programme outlines, a more detailed and in-depth aspect of the development of specific programmes within the framework, which included the incorporation of cross-cutting issues into planned activities, and in implementing, monitoring and evaluating the CCF during the annual reviews, an innovation for Mozambique, as well as during the mid-term review of the programme. The annual reviews, which would involve the participation of a wide range of development partners, would assess the impact of UNDP interventions in a systematic manner, for which indicators and benchmarks were being developed.

120. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Mozambique (DP/CCF/MOZ/1).

B. Assistance to Myanmar (DP/1998/11)

121. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific introduced the note by the Administrator on assistance to Myanmar (DP/1998/11). The purpose of the note was to provide an assessment of the extent to which assistance to Myanmar continued to meet the provisions of Governing Council decision 93/21 and Executive Board decision 96/1. He noted that an independent team of six senior international experts had undertaken an assessment mission to Myanmar from 24 August through 13 September 1997, the report on which had been made available to Board members. Additional information had also been provided during an informal briefing, held on 21 January 1998. The mission assessed the results and achievements of the Human Development Initiative-Extension (HDI-E), the lessons learned, and the extent to which HDI-E projects continued to meet the provisions of the relevant Governing Council and Executive Board legislation. The Assistant Administrator, referring to the conclusions and recommendations of the assessment report, said that the HDI was a successful evolving model for dealing with poverty alleviation at the grass-roots level, without exclusion or discrimination. The HDI-E projects were being implemented by United Nations specialized agencies, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), both international and national. NGOs continued to play an important role in the implementation of project activities and in facilitating community participation at the grass-roots level. Diplomatic missions resident in Yangon continued to be fully briefed by the UNDP Resident Representative and Resident Coordinator and regular visits to HDI-E project sites for embassy officials enabled them to observe first-hand UNDP activities at the community and grass-roots levels. Four such field visits had taken place during 1997, for a total of 32 senior diplomats from 24 countries. Regular briefings for civil society continued to be organized by the Resident Representative and senior UNDP management.

122. The Assistant Administrator assured Executive Board members that due attention continued to be given to the monitoring of HDI-E projects. In addition to the establishment of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, HDI-E had recruited two full-time international monitoring and evaluation officers to ensure that the function was carried out on a continuous basis.

123. Several delegations noted that their embassies in Yangon had commented favourably on UNDP grass-roots activities in Myanmar within the framework of the HDI-E. UNDP was encouraged to explore further geographic expansion of its activities, including a programme to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees to Rakhine State, and to continue efforts to improve livelihoods in villages and communities, in line with Governing Council and Executive Board decisions 93/21 and 96/1. One delegation inquired about the selection and recruitment of local staff, and stressed the need for maximum transparency and programme advocacy. Another delegation, supported by several others, commended HDI as a successful model for poverty alleviation that could be replicated in other countries. One delegation noted that sustainability was an important but sometimes difficult goal to achieve; nevertheless, efforts to ensure sustainability should be incorporated into the design of the future programme. One delegation queried how UNDP was tackling the issue of education and training outlined in paragraph 10 of document DP/1998/11, i.e., constraints to school attendance and what measures were being taken to address the issue. Another delegation suggested that consideration be given to the recruitment of a development anthropologist to see how projects affected village structures and dynamics, as well as to the preparation of a report on the impact of HDI-E project activities. Coordination between and among United Nations agencies operating in Myanmar was also stressed. Several delegations underlined the importance attached to monitoring of UNDP activities and adherence to Governing Council decision 93/21 and Executive Board decision 96/1. Delegations highly commended UNDP for the successful development work it had carried out in Myanmar under difficult circumstances.

124. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and the UNDP Resident Representative and Resident Coordinator responded to the statements of delegations. Delegations were assured that up-to-date methodologies, structures and mechanisms were in place to accommodate the needs of the poorest in an efficient manner, without exclusion or discrimination. These would be further refined and made more effective for better project delivery. Efforts would be made to produce impact assessment reports on selected HDI-E activities at the grass-roots level in the future. Future assistance would include looking into the possibility of recruiting a development anthropologist. The UNDP Resident Representative and Resident Coordinator reassured members that the selection and recruitment of HDI-E project staff at all levels adhered strictly to UNDP and United Nations recruitment procedures. Insofar as coordination among United Nations specialized agencies was concerned, the Resident Coordinator met regularly with United Nations agency colleagues in Myanmar to discuss common approaches and joint programming of activities. One such example was the approach being developed through collaborative efforts of United Nations specialized agencies to support a programme for rehabilitation and reintegration of the returnees to northern Rakhine State. On the question of sustainability, UNDP continued to

work closely with community-based and grass-roots organizations to build capacity at the local level. Small infrastructure projects, for example, building bridges across waterways, were initiated and carried out by communities themselves, with support from UNDP.

125. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Administrator on assistance to Myanmar contained in document DP/1998/11 and decided to consider, at its annual session 1998, a proposal for future UNDP assistance to Myanmar in conformity with Governing Council decision 93/21 and Executive Board decision 96/1.

C. Implementation strategies for regional cooperation frameworks

General remarks

126. General issues raised by delegations related to collaboration with regional institutions, other United Nations agencies and Bretton Woods institutions; the establishment of success criteria and monitoring; the added value of UNDP activities and its comparative advantage in terms of its multiple roles in regions; and the possibility that some regional activities would be better addressed at the national level, including through CCFs.

Africa

127. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa recalled the extensive consultations that took place prior to the formulation of the first regional cooperation framework (RCF). She then introduced the document on the regional implementation strategy for the first RCF for Africa (DP/1998/6), emphasizing that the support strategies delineated in the document would be the vehicles for assisting countries, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and the private sector in moving forward towards the goals of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

128. Most delegations agreed that the implementation strategy was a definite improvement on the first RCF (DP/RCF/RBA/1) and that the recommendations of the Executive Board decision 97/9 had been closely followed. A number of delegations raised issues relating to regional collaboration, success criteria and monitoring, the value-added of UNDP activities and its competency to undertake a multiplicity of roles at the regional level. One delegation stated that collaboration with bilateral organizations should have been addressed in the document. Cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa was viewed as important.

129. Some delegations expressed the view that the success criteria and impact indicators should have been more explicit and measurable. Specific mention was made of the success criteria outlined in the section of the document on pluralism and democratic change, namely, increased stability in programme countries, which one delegation found to be too broad and impractical as a measurable impact indicator. One delegation stated that it would be useful to develop criteria for selected countries of intervention as well as for NGOs participating as implementing agencies.

130. Some delegations noted that some of the activities discussed in the document would probably be better dealt with in the context of CCFs. Examples included activities in the areas of governance, micro-credit and national long-term perspective study exercises. Some delegations also questioned the relationship between the implementation strategy for the RCF and the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa (UNSIA).

131. Several delegations noted a need to prioritize activities. One delegation indicated that UNDP, in collaboration with other specialized agencies, should support activities relating to migration and conflict prevention although those activities were not in the organization's main areas of competency.

132. One delegation expressed concern about the role of UNDP at the regional level, stating that it should be more a role of complementarity than of leadership. The same delegation noted that success criteria and expected outputs could be more quantifiable. The delegation also suggested that the issue of female genital mutilation be included under the thematic area of gender.

133. One delegation expressed satisfaction that the implementation strategy catered to the needs of the continent and that the document itself was well focused and emphasized that good governance was at the centre of development. Another delegation emphasized that resource mobilization was one of the most important features of the RCF. There would be a need to monitor results in that area strictly, notably in the private sector.

134. One delegation agreed that the focus areas identified in the document were an appropriate basis for UNDP activities and that good governance was the key cross-cutting theme. The same delegation was particularly satisfied with the discussion in the document on the trade subprogramme and intraregional and interregional cooperation programmes.

135. Another delegation raised the issue of UNDP collaboration with the United Nations New Agenda for Development in Africa in the 1990s and pointed out that a review conducted several years ago was not satisfactory. The same delegation queried whether similar problems would arise in terms of cooperation with UNSIA.

136. In response to the concerns raised by delegations, the Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa noted that more detailed success criteria would be developed at the programme and project design stage. Programme support documents and workplans would fully reflect those criteria. He noted that the RCFs provided value-added to country programming exercises by formulating policy instruments at the regional level, which were then translated into national policy instruments, for example, national long-term perspective studies. Additionally, global initiatives and competencies were more easily translated into concrete actions at the regional, subregional and then national levels. The regional programme also supported networking and the exchange of information and best practices that were of particular value at the national level. The regional programme provided catalytic support to country-generated initiatives that addressed common challenges and priorities of groups of countries within the region.

137. Capacity-building was the overall goal of all activities under the RCF. With regard to the relationship between UNSIA and the RCF, he noted that the governance initiative had been entrusted to UNDP through UNSIA. The main activities were to seek support and to mobilize resources for those countries with governance programmes. UNDP had also provided support to NADAF through its Secretariat. Regarding trade, UNDP worked with the World Trade Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Intellectual Property Organization and at times with the World Bank in that area, not in a leading role, but by providing support.

138. The Executive Board approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Africa (1997-2001) as contained in document DP/1998/6.

Arab States

139. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for the Arab States provided a brief introduction. He stated that the main characteristics of the implementation strategy contained in document DP/1998/7 and Corr.1 included: greater focus; increased ownership of the regional programme by the Arab region; increased accountability; maximized impact; sustainability; and the fostering of the region's cooperation with the Euro-Mediterranean and Africa regions.

140. Delegations commented that the document contained clear and direct ideas and proposals and endorsed the implementation strategies for the programmes and projects in the RCF. Delegations noted that the framework was built on past accomplishments and reflected the common culture, ideals and aspirations of the region, a necessary basis for sound development and the implementation of a good regional programme. Delegations noted that they hoped to see further collaboration with the regional commissions in the implementation of the programmes and projects under the RCF.

141. Several delegations expressed the view that the promotion of micro-financing projects was an important element of the RCF. In that regard, it was stressed that UNDP would benefit from the outcome of an important meeting on the subject that was held in Washington, D.C., in 1997. It was also suggested that UNDP collaborate with other United Nations agencies, especially the United Nations Children's Fund, which was already working in the area of micro-credit.

142. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Bureau for the Arab States thanked delegations for their support. Close cooperation and dialogue with Governments and institutions in the region would continue throughout the preparations for programme implementation.

143. With regard to the general issues raised about the RCFs and their implementation strategies, the Assistant Administrator noted that micro-credit projects in the Arab States region served as a concrete instrument for poverty eradication. Those projects targeted the poorest and most vulnerable groups, particularly women, who had no access to markets. Micro-credit was a new modality in the region. Accordingly, pilot projects would be implemented at the

country level to test feasibility and viability. Methodologies were being developed that were specific to countries in the region and geared towards a demonstrable impact on poverty eradication and the creation of self-employment opportunities. Three pilot projects would serve as demonstration and learning instruments for expansion through the regional programme to national programmes through CCFs. He hoped that regional institutions would join UNDP to create enabling environment or to directly support or expand micro-credit programmes on their own.

144. The Assistant Administrator agreed with the requests of several delegations for more precise quantitative and qualitative benchmarks and success criteria in RCFs, particularly the requests for better success criteria. Past experience had shown that they were essential for evaluation and assessment. Precise criteria were incorporated into the formulation of subprogrammes and their supporting documentation. The triennial review of the RCF would report on the subject to the Executive Board.

145. Regarding one delegation's comments on international trade, it was the role of UNDP to provide assistance to UNCTAD and other institutions to ensure the participation of the region in the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and processes for international trade. The Arab States share of intraregional and international trade was rudimentary. The low level of capital flows was reflected in low per capita gross national products. This, in turn, reduced the ability of the States in the region to combat poverty.

146. The Executive Board approved the regional implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (1997-2001) as contained in document DP/1998/7 and Corr.1.

Asia and the Pacific

147. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific gave a brief introduction on the implementation strategy for the RCF (DP/1998/8). He noted that, as indicated in the document, the strategy was based on a number of parameters: focus, in terms of subregions, through various intergovernmental and other mechanisms, as well as in terms of themes; ownership, particularly by the Governments of the region, in partnership with UNDP, in the implementation of the programmes; capacity-building; learning and information-sharing mechanisms; linkages between global, regional and national programmes; collaboration with United Nations specialized agencies, regional commissions and other intergovernmental regional organizations; leveraging additional resources to enhance the impact and effectiveness of the regional programmes; and built-in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that the focus would become even more refined and that the results of monitoring and evaluation would be fed back into the implementation of the regional programmes.

148. Delegations expressed general satisfaction with and endorsed the implementation strategy. They agreed that the document provided a useful and clear elaboration of the programmes contained in the RCF, and presented tangible indicators of success, as well as a comprehensive description of the programmes and projects that would be implemented.

149. A number of delegations expressed approval of particular aspects of the implementation strategy, namely, its institution-building and institution-strengthening components, the emphasis on evaluations, the subregional and thematic focus, and support for the use of the technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) modality. One delegation in particular welcomed the harmonious overlap of UNDP development activities in the region with its bilateral programme.

150. Strong support was expressed for the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) subregional programme and for the need to build a sense of community within North-East Asia through the Tumen River Area Development Programme. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Trade and Equity Programme was also considered to be timely and well-targeted. The South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP) was viewed as presenting opportunities for replication in other parts of the region. Delegations requested details on how individual national and governmental institutions would be involved in the implementation of SAPAP and how the programme would provide catalytic support to national poverty programmes with SAARC countries. Delegations also expressed appreciation for the sensitivity to regionally defined values in work in the area of governance. Delegations also expressed support for the Mekong River Programme and requested that additional programme areas be identified for the extension of Global Environment Facility activities within the programme. Delegations endorsed the Asia Pacific Development Information Programme.

151. Several delegations inquired if and how UNDP regional programmes would address the current financial crisis in South-East and East Asia, and queried what role UNDP could play in the situation.

152. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and the Chief of the Regional Programme and Policy Division responded to the comments and queries of delegations. The Assistant Administrator noted that regional programmes sought to bring countries together, particularly on sustainable human development themes such as gender, poverty eradication and the environment. Lessons learned from the evaluation of SAPAP would be shared with other subregions and regions. Many regional and national institutions would be actively engaged in the implementation of SAPAP. The Tumen River Development Programme helped to foster peace and stability in North-East Asia. With regard to the financial crisis, it was observed that challenges for individual countries were best addressed at the national level.

153. The Chief of the Regional Programme and Policy Division indicated that UNDP shared the positive view expressed by one delegation that the work of its bilateral programme dovetailed with that of UNDP, including in terms of the ASEAN programme and support for the ASEAN secretariat. He also noted that the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific's piloting of information technology in the region was an especially useful tool and a particularly appropriate medium for the exchange of information about regional programme activities. Regarding the recent financial crisis in the region, while UNDP did not have a financial mandate, the organization's entry point would be in terms of the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable groups.

154. The Executive Board approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific (1997-2001) as contained in document DP/1998/8.

Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

155. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States introduced the implementation strategy for the first RCF (DP/1998/9). He noted that he was pleased to share with Executive Board members the Bureau's year-end publication, "Making Things Happen, Getting It Done". He highlighted the key features of the RCF, which was composed of seven projects in five areas of focus: poverty eradication; gender equality; governance; sustainable livelihoods; and the environment. The main principle in the design of the framework was that each of the seven projects would support a national project or activity, financed out of country-level UNDP resources, as the main instrument for advocacy, capacity-building and implementation at the country level. At the same time, each national project would feed back experience into a regional project and to other national projects, so that an operational TCDC network would become a reality. The Regional Support Centre had been established in Bratislava to oversee implementation of the RCF. Feedback of data from national and regional cooperation would facilitate coordination and strengthen links between regional projects and respective donor agencies. It would also assist in the implementation of global projects in the region.

156. Many delegations commended the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States for the high quality of the document and for the conceptual foundation of its design. They endorsed the overall thrust and thematic priorities of the RCF. One delegation asked why Saint Helena had been included in the region.

157. One delegation remarked that in paragraph 7 (f) of document DP/1998/9, mention should have been made of the possibilities for collaboration between UNDP and other donors, particularly the European Union and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The emphasis given to TCDC was commended. Another delegation highlighted the relevance of the small- and medium-scale enterprise project that had originated as a successful national project in his country. The governance project was commended for the support it had given to the Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies on Democracy Development, which was held in Bucharest, Romania, from 2 to 4 September 1997. Support was also expressed for giving higher priority to the strengthening of subregional transport networks, including the linkages between the "Silk Road" in Central Asia and Europe.

158. Other delegations stressed the need to strengthen links with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), particularly in the areas of the development of social indicators, and with the European Union, in relation to the environment. They also highlighted the relevance of the projects relating to the environment, small- and medium-scale enterprises, governance and the management of external resources to their countries. The situation of the Regional Support Centre in Bratislava was commended.

159. One delegation observed that his country hoped that the post of the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States would be upgraded to that of Assistant Secretary-General, thus making the level of the post the same as the comparable posts in the other regional bureaux. The same delegation inquired about what UNDP would be able to do in terms of follow-up to the Third International Conference of the New or Restored Democracies on Democracy Development.

160. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for the Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States thanked the delegations for their constructive comments, which would be incorporated into the development of the regional programme.

161. UNDP would continue to work closely with the other actors in the region, as stated in the first RCF (DP/RCF/REU/1). Perhaps UNDP cooperation with the European Union and OECD should have been elaborated on again in the implementation strategy.

162. On the query by one delegation about why Saint Helena was covered by the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Assistant Administrator noted that Saint Helena had asked to be included in the region.

163. Regarding TCDC, the region shared its experience with Latin America in particular, especially since that region recently had been through a similar transition process. Regarding one delegation's query about follow-up to the recent conference on new or restored democracies in Bucharest, UNDP had followed up and would be willing to listen to suggestions about follow-up in the future.

164. In terms of projects relating to infrastructure, the "Silk Road" project could be expanded to include other elements in the region. Regarding the comment on the development of indicators, UNDP was working with ECE on the development of social indicators and with the European Union in the area of environment. The Assistant Administrator also mentioned that the Regional Bureau was planning to convene a meeting on the subject of human rights, scheduled to be held in Yalta, Ukraine, in September 1998, in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, Austria, from 14-25 June 1993.

165. The Associate Administrator took the floor briefly to announce that the position of the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States had been upgraded to that of Assistant Secretary-General.

166. The Executive Board approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (1997-1999) as contained in document DP/1998/9.

Latin America and the Caribbean

167. In introducing the implementation strategy for the first RCF for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/1998/10), the Assistant Administrator and Director

of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean concentrated his opening remarks on the value-added of the regional programme; the consultation process that had been undertaken in formulating the strategy and which was ongoing in terms of programme and project development; the thematic areas of focus; the monitoring and evaluation initiatives being developed; and the financial aspects of the programme.

168. With regard to the value-added of the regional programme, the Assistant Administrator observed that the programme provided a long-term vision for the development efforts in the Latin America and Caribbean region. In addition, owing to its areas of focus and the activities contained therein, there was also a policy-related dimension to the programme. Other important aspects included its complementary nature in terms of national-level activities and the region-wide networking strategy to be implemented.

169. The Assistant Administrator underscored the fact that during the formulation of programmes and projects, the consultative process undertaken to define the priority areas of the programme was continuing with the relevant sectors of Governments. With regard to monitoring and evaluation, the Regional Bureau was developing a matrix consisting of some 40 variables to be used to assess the impact of national and regional projects. In addition, work was ongoing with the Office of Evaluation and other units to produce better definitions of performance indicators for each regional programme and project.

170. The decline in core resources from the $20.7 million listed in the resource mobilization target table of the first RCF for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RCF/RLA/1), which was submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session 1997, to the $15.2 million currently targeted for the period of the RCF was highlighted. In that connection, the importance of mobilizing additional resources as well as building partnerships with and among other donors and international financial institutions in order to realize greater programme and project impact were key facets of the regional programme.

171. Many delegations registered strong support for the implementation strategy for the first RCF as a whole and expressed their appreciation for the details supplied on implementation strategies for each thematic area. Several delegations also welcomed the consultative process that had been initiated in the formulation of the implementation strategy document. Nevertheless, some delegations stated that there was a need to increase dialogue between UNDP and national focal points for technical cooperation. Enhancing the flow of information, they maintained, would provide for better coordination of the programme.

172. Many delegations drew attention to and registered concern about the declining amount of core resources for the regional programme. In that connection, they underscored the importance of complementary resources and the fostering of partnerships.

173. Specific questions were raised about the apparent lack of attention to indigenous people; the role and involvement of national institutions, particularly NGOs, in the building of information and sustainable development networks; the specific countries participating in the comparative studies on

social public expenditure and macroeconomic policies; and the complementary nature of UNDP work in the area of regional integration with that being conducted by the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

174. In responding to the issues raised by delegations, the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean stressed the importance of strengthening dialogue between national Governments and particularly between technical cooperation focal points as programmes and projects under the RCF continued to be formulated and implemented. The web page to be established would help to keep Governments, UNDP country offices and other stakeholders and partners informed on all matters pertaining to the regional programme, thereby enhancing coordination. He also observed that subregional meetings for follow-up on programme formulation and execution would be convened periodically.

175. With regard to the inadequate attention in the implementation strategy document to indigenous populations, the Assistant Administrator stated that poverty and environmental issues could not be addressed without taking into consideration all disadvantaged groups, and that the concerns of indigenous populations were being addressed in the relevant programmes and projects.

176. Commenting specifically on the incorporation of national institutions into information networks, the Assistant Administrator noted that the intention was to work with existing networks in order to establish the Network for Sustainable Development in the Americas. He noted that the Caribbean dimension of the Small Island Developing States Network (SIDSNET) would be linked to the hemispheric network and assured delegations that information on all key sectors would be incorporated.

177. In response to a specific query by one delegation, the Assistant Administrator listed the 11 countries participating in the comparative studies on social public expenditure and macroeconomic policies and indicated that the delegation had been invited to participate.

178. The Assistant Administrator reiterated his and the Bureau's commitment to the implementation of the regional programme. The programme's success, he suggested, would rest heavily on the continuation of the good relationship that had been built between the Regional Bureau and its national partners. He looked forward to strengthening that relationship.

179. The Executive Board approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean as contained in document DP/1998/10.

VI. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Change and non-core funding

180. The Administrator introduced the report on the policy implications of change and non-core funding (DP/1998/3), the executive summary of "Building Development Partnerships through Development Financing" (DP/1997/CRP.25), the

review of the round-table process (DP/1998/CRP.2), and policy implications of change and non-core funding: case studies (DP/1998/CRP.3).

181. Fifty-four delegations took the floor in the discussion of the subject, with many speakers supporting the approach outlined in document DP/1998/3. Most speakers underlined the severe situation created by the declining contributions to the core budget of UNDP. Core contributions ensured that activities were undertaken in line with the principles of universality and multilateralism. However, given the increase in non-core funding, many delegations recognized its important role and requested regular and transparent reporting to the Executive Board on non-core funding. Some delegations underlined that they did not see a linkage between the rise in non-core and the reduction in core funding, given the contributions of some donors to both types of funding.

182. Many speakers suggested that guidelines on the use of non-core resources were needed, in particular to create equal accountability for both forms of funding. That measure must include ensuring utilization of non-core resources in UNDP priority areas and cost-recovery from non-core activities to avoid subsidizing non-core activities by core funding. One delegation requested an independent evaluation of non-core funding in the near future. Many delegations emphasized that UNDP must not move away from its mandate through use of non-core funding and that it must demonstrate that it had the capacity to handle non-core funding activities. UNDP interventions must be country-driven, and in that regard, programme countries should have a role in how non-core funding was utilized, some speakers noted.

183. Many delegations noted the sizeable amount of non-core funding, mainly through Government cost-sharing, in their own countries. The amount of non-core was often many times greater than that of core funding. In such cases, core resources were seen as seed capital for the attraction of non-core resources. The importance of UNDP cooperation in their countries in building national capacity was highlighted by many speakers. Some speakers underlined that the high levels of non-core funding in some countries allowed UNDP to utilize its core funds to benefit low-income countries. One speaker cited General Assembly resolution 42/211, in which the General Assembly had requested non-core funding to be integrated coherently in UNDP. Non-core funding must thus be incorporated in the country cooperation frameworks.

184. One delegation, also on behalf of two others, stated that the report did not respond to their questions on the impact of non-core funding through trust funds, the global framework, and loans from international financial institutions. Document DP/1998/3 described only the advantages of non-core funding. A more detailed picture was needed, with inputs from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Office for Project Services. There was concern that UNDP was becoming an executing agency for the Bretton Woods institutions. The subcontracting to external bodies clearly could not be subject to prior programming of UNDP. The management of activities funded through non-core activities was taking an increasing amount of resident representatives' time, which was turning UNDP into a planning and development agency. The delegations had serious concerns about direct implementation by UNDP.

185. One delegation stated that government cost-sharing provided for over 62 per cent of non-core funding and noted that most of non-core funding was limited to certain countries. Several speakers commented that it was not clear how the future growth of non-core resources could benefit low-income countries.

186. Another delegation, on behalf of the Executive Board members from the Latin America and the Caribbean Group, expressed appreciation for the work of UNDP in their countries. The decline in contributions to core resources and its resulting impact on development activities was of key concern. In the Group's view, document DP/1998/3 did not examine all modalities of non-core funding since it focused mainly on government cost-sharing, and not on trust funds and third-party cost-sharing. Information on contributions from NGOs and the private sector was not included. The Group was of the opinion that given the reduction in core resources, non-core contributions had allowed the activities in UNDP priority areas to continue.

187. One delegation, on behalf of the Caribbean Community, expressed concern about the rise in non-core funding. Countries that had reached graduation were vulnerable and still faced harsh economic realities. Steps needed to be taken to improve the presence of UNDP in the Caribbean region.

188. It was noted that the expanding role of national execution necessitated some adjustment to policies and procedures. Many speakers expressed support for the increased use of that modality, including through joint management. One delegation, supported by others, favoured the language contained in paragraph 53 of document DP/1998/3 with regard to UNDP provision of support services for implementation within certain parameters. One delegation noted concern about the decline in execution by specialized agencies. Another delegation expressed appreciation for the establishment of the Regional Support Centre for the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States region in Bratislava, which had facilitated training with regard to new rules and regulations.

189. One speaker, supported by others, underlined the need for UNDP to demonstrate the impact of its activities in order to ensure sustained contributions to the core budget. In that regard, visual materials were needed, as well as Goodwill Ambassadors. Another delegation emphasized the need for UNDP to give sufficient incentives to donors to increase their contributions.

190. One delegation commented on the section concerning the round-table process in document DP/1998/CRP.2, stating that round-table meetings provided a development forum between major donors and recipients on strategies and policy reforms. UNDP had made a major contribution to economic growth in developing countries over the past 25 years through the round-table process. However, the speaker encouraged UNDP to proceed with caution when round-table meetings involved politically sensitive elements. Close consultations with all parties should take place as matters relating to the round-table process had political implications. In that regard, his delegation believed that the role of international organizations should be supplementary to that of major stakeholders in a particular region. Reporting to the Executive Board on the outcomes of round-table meetings should be institutionalized in order to ensure proper feedback. The document was thus useful and should be updated

periodically. Two delegations requested a continuation of the discussion on round-table meetings at the annual session 1998.

191. Some speakers requested more information on the effects of non-core funding to countries in special circumstances, in particular as referred to in paragraph 20 (b) of document DP/1998/3.

192. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Planning and Resource Management noted that the approach to and principles for non-core funding had been well articulated by many of the speakers. He informed the Executive Board that there would be increased reporting on non-core funding and the neutrality of UNDP would not be compromised. The aspects of non-core funding not elaborated on in document DP/1998/3 would be covered in the informal discussion on case studies. More detailed information on statistics on cost-sharing in the different regions would be provided in the informal session. He agreed that it was a legitimate concern that least developed countries could not benefit from government cost-sharing and, in that regard, a healthy core budget would benefit those countries the most. He agreed that UNDP needed to safeguard the multilateral aspect of UNDP and direct its resources to least developed countries. New financial reporting systems would allow for more standardized reporting to development partners. On national execution, he noted that the rapid shift to that modality had created some concern, in particular with regard to national capacity. Specific conditions for continued country office support to national execution had been proposed in document DP/1998/3. In addition, new guidelines for national execution would soon be issued.

193. The Assistant Administrator stated that there seemed to be an emerging consensus that programme countries would gain from all sources of funding as long as they remained country-driven. He noted that the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks would support integrated approaches to resource mobilization and programming, including with specialized agencies and the United Nations Office for Project Services. With regard to cost recovery, he noted that UNDP charged for additional work created by non-core projects. The fact that those fees were relatively modest for nationally executed projects, typically 3 to 5 per cent, compared to the 13 per cent charged by United Nations specialized agencies was an illustration of the characteristics of national execution, where the Government carried out most of the functions with only limited support by UNDP. In response to a query raised, he confirmed that paragraph 20 (b) did refer to UNDP approaches to countries in special circumstances.

194. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

98/2. Review of policy implications of change and non-core funding

The Executive Board

1. Recalls General Assembly resolutions 47/199, 50/120, 50/227 and 52/203, Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/59, and its decisions 90/14,

95/23 and its decision 97/15 on change management, particularly paragraphs 9 and 10 thereof;

2. Welcomes the report of the Administrator (DP/1998/3) and takes note of the comments made thereon by delegations;

3. Reaffirms that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities of the United Nations Development Programme should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism;

4. Emphasizes the role of the United Nations Development Programme as a development partner and facilitator in responding to development needs, including the assistance in mobilizing funds in support of programme country development priorities from all available sources;

5. Recalls that core resources are the bedrock of the United Nations Development Programme and that they ensure universality, predictability, neutrality and multilateralism at the United Nations Development Programme as well as the ability to respond in a flexible way to the needs of programme countries, in particular those of least developed countries and low-income countries;

6. Expresses deep concern on the decline in core resources and the negative impact of this decline on the future work of the United Nations Development Programme and requests that the respective proportions of core and non-core resources be kept under review;

7. Recognizes the importance of non-core resources, including cost-sharing and non-traditional sources of financing, as a mechanism to enhance the capacity and supplement the means of the United Nations Development Programme to achieve the goals and priorities specified in decision 94/14;

8. Reaffirms the role of the United Nations Development Programme at the country level in providing a range of support services for national execution and the implementation of the projects of the United Nations Development Programme, including those funded by non-core resources, within the parameters below:

(a) Support will be provided only at the request of programme country Governments;

(b) Support will be provided only for activities within the country cooperation framework and the sustainable human development framework;

(c) Support will be provided based on a thorough capacity assessment of the executing agent, particularly with regard to administrative and operational management capacity and with regard to full accountability for funds managed by the United Nations Development Programme;

(d) Support will be accompanied by appropriate capacity-building measures, including clear exit strategies to ensure that long-term capacity-building objectives are achieved;

(e) As part of the revision of the national execution procedures, appropriate instruments will be put in place to improve the monitoring and the evaluation of such services, including obligatory annexes to all project documents stating the nature and scope of such support as well as the functions and responsibilities of the parties involved;

(f) At the request of the Government of the programme country, the United Nations Development Programme will take systematically into account services that can be provided by United Nations specialized agencies or other relevant execution, implementing and procurement agents;

(g) In accordance with Executive Board decision 94/28, the role of the United Nations Development Programme as executing agent shall remain limited to countries in special circumstances and apply only when it can be demonstrated that it is essential to safeguard the full responsibility and accountability of the Administrator for effective programme and project delivery;

9. Requests that, when the United Nations Development Programme develops, implements and manages activities funded by non-core resources, in an integrated, transparent, flexible and accountable manner, the additional costs resulting from non-core-funded activities be fully recovered and requests also that these activities and their support costs be systematically identified in the cooperation frameworks;

10. Requests the Administrator to submit to the Executive Board at its annual session 2001 an evaluation, in consultation with programme countries, relevant units of the United Nations system and with members of the Board, on all aspects of activities funded by non-core resources, including government cost-sharing, and on their impact on national capacities, particularly concerning the modalities applied by the United Nations Development Programme;

11. Decides to keep the trends and impact of non-core resources under close review and to this end requests the Administrator, in the context of his annual report, to provide comprehensive information thereon, including on their amount, origin, destination and influence on programming.

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195. One delegation explained that its acceptance of paragraph 8 (g) of the decision had been a compromise. His delegation understood the text to mean that UNDP country office support to national execution and programme implementation would not include project execution activities and functions similar to subcontracting.

Funding strategy

196. The Administrator stated that the discussions on change, focus and non-core resources had been some of the most important discussions in the Executive Board in recent years. The active participation of Board members and observers demonstrated the high degree of support, commitment and ownership on the part of both programme countries and donors. He particularly appreciated the number of programme countries that had spoken so well about the work of UNDP. The statements of the programme countries about the development realities in their countries enriched the discussion by adding a great deal of substance and detail. The Board was also setting new guiding principles for the work of UNDP. A consensus was emerging on the guiding principles for the substantive role and focus of UNDP and it was hoped that the same would be the case for the parameters for the UNDP role in non-core resources mobilization and country office support to national execution. Such a consensus was important to UNDP and it would definitely not mean business as usual for UNDP.

197. Based on those comments, the Administrator expressed his firm resolve to ensure that core and non-core resources would be deployed by the same guiding principles, which would better define the SHD focus of UNDP. Non-core and core funding would operate under the same policies and procedures, with no double standards. New interventions would not be approved without applying the guiding principles, and existing activities would be reviewed in light of the decisions made during the present session.

198. He stated that country office support to national execution would be provided only at the request of programme countries and only to support clear SHD objectives and capacity-building, accompanied by clear exit strategies. All existing activities would be reviewed to ensure that any activities that did not fulfil those objectives were phased out. A special effort would be made to ensure that low-income countries could benefit from the growth in non-core resources, responding to key developmental priorities.

199. The Administrator stated his intention to submit, within the context of UNDP 2001, to an evaluation starting in two years, that would focus on how the guiding principles and the parameters set were applied. Every delegation was invited to take a closer look at the work of UNDP, through field visits, assessments at the country level, and through the triennial reviews of country cooperation frameworks.

200. Discussion then followed on the report of the Administrator on moving towards a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP (DP/1997/CRP.23), which had been formally introduced at the third regular session 1997.

201. One delegation, also on behalf of another, welcomed the timeliness of the discussion. Both delegations reiterated the importance they attached to core resources for UNDP and stated that both core and non-core funding were integral components of a broader UNDP funding strategy. They recognized that a continued decline in core resources had caused great difficulties for the implementation of UNDP country programmes and the efforts of the Administrator to protect country programmes by extending their implementation phase. However, there was concern that further programme extensions could ultimately affect programme

results and the credibility of UNDP as a reliable development partner. The Executive Board thus needed to be better informed on the overall funding commitments made when approving country cooperation frameworks and to be fully aware of the potential financial implications of policy and other types of decisions brought to the Board for decision. Action to address UNDP funding needed to be forthcoming, taking into account several considerations, including the linkages between core and non-core funding, between UNDP funding and its capacity to implement programmes and between UNDP funding and its role and place in international development. The mandate given to the Board by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council also needed to be considered, in particular in light of United Nations reform. The Board needed to reconcile those factors with the longer-term period needed to effectively address UNDP funding. The Board should adopt a holistic and strategic approach to the matter, through short-term practical measures and with a longer, more strategic reflection process that would conclude with the adoption of a funding mechanism to place UNDP funding on a more secure and predictable basis.

202. The Secretariat was requested to produce a three-year financial forecast outlining the commitments resulting from programming, policy and reform decisions adopted by the Executive Board during the fifth cycle, and during earlier cycles, if appropriate. The ultimate objective of such a process would be to develop a compact to ensure a sustainable funding base for UNDP. Any change made to the basic funding principles of UNDP should also be equally applicable to other funds and programmes.

203. The two delegations proposed the creation of an ad hoc, open-ended working group of the Executive Board, to be chaired by one of the Vice-Presidents of the Bureau to be appointed by the President. The group would report to the Board on progress achieved at each of the sessions in 1998. The Board should agree on a mandate and realistic timetable for such a group. In their opinion, the mandate of the working group should include, among other things: the creation of an enabling environment that would allow UNDP to see an increase in core contributions, including a review of the current UNDP communication strategy; consideration of various financing mechanisms that take into account different legislative procedures in donor countries; the development of a methodology to set realistic financial targets for core resources; consideration of the current UNDP funding allocation criteria in light of the economic and financial changes that had recently taken place; and a review of the contribution to country development objectives of all existing funding modalities for systems and programmes that drew funding from core resources. The third regular session 1998 was proposed as a target date at which the Board could adopt the first of a number of decisions that would ultimately comprise a UNDP funding compact.

204. Delegations welcomed the proposal for an ad hoc open-ended working group on the funding strategy and expressed their commitment to participating in the group. Many speakers emphasized the importance of the working group's terms of reference. Speakers suggested several issues to be addressed by the working group, including funding levels, predictability, eligibility and graduation, and technical issues such as distribution and the resident coordinator system.

205. Many speakers underlined that core contributions should remain the bedrock of UNDP in order to preserve the organization's multilateral character. The

sharp decline in core contributions during the past few years was of great concern to all. Many speakers noted the severe impact of the decline in funding on least developed countries. Political will was needed to resolve the problem. It was agreed that the time had indeed arrived for agreement on a sustainable funding strategy that would allow for funding on a predictable and assured basis. Some speakers encouraged emerging donors to make additional contributions to UNDP. Several delegations suggested widening the donor base in an effort to obtain a more equitable formula for burden-sharing in funding core contributions. It was noted by some that many programme countries had increased their contributions in recent years. Some speakers suggested the institution of a multi-year pledging mechanism.

206. Several speakers underlined the need for UNDP to refocus its activities and to have a stronger profile in donor countries. Parliamentarians in particular needed to be sensitized about the achievements of UNDP. One speaker noted that UNDP had been very effective in presenting its work to his Government, which had helped to increase its contribution in 1998 to $98 million. The request for the 1999 contribution would be commensurate with that of 1998. Some delegations recognized the positive efforts UNDP had made to increase programme delivery, reduce expenditures and narrow its focus. Others underlined the need for UNDP to examine its own future and determine how it would operate in coming years.

207. One delegation, also on behalf of another, noted that many of the ideas presented with regard to the funding strategy were contained in the Nordic Reform Project, including assurance of funding on a predictable and continuous basis and contributions from all donors to the financing system. That delegation also suggested that the discussion on focus at the present session be linked with the new funding strategy.

208. Some delegations noted that it would be difficult for them to commit to multi-year pledges. One delegation stated that it was essential to maintain the principle of voluntary contributions to UNDP. Another speaker stated that funding targets needed to be more realistic to avoid the long debate when those targets could not be achieved. Some speakers noted that while the strong dollar reduced the value of the exchange rate for some currencies in their contributions to UNDP, it also increased the purchasing power of UNDP. One delegation stated that the eligibility criteria for core resources for programme countries should be reconsidered. That delegation wondered if UNDP could to maintain its presence in all programme countries. Some delegations questioned whether it was appropriate for UNDP to continue funding all the costs of the resident coordinator system. One delegation requested that countries in special circumstances be given particular consideration.

209. The Administrator responded to the comments made in the debate. He emphasized that the future of UNDP was at stake. He noted a broad agreement among Executive Board members to build up core contributions on a more assured basis. UNDP would act in partnership with the working group and provide inputs as requested. The suggestions made by delegations would be very useful. He noted that two upcoming processes would also contribute to the discussion, including the debates on the Secretary-General's report on funding and the process of examining financing pursuant to recent General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions. He urged programme countries to communicate

more with donors. More feedback from middle-income countries who received international assistance would be welcomed. The Administrator stated that UNDP would work to increase its contribution to India and noted with appreciation that country's contribution to UNDP. South-South cooperation would increase. In closing, he stated that he looked forward to working with the Executive Board on the funding strategy.

210. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

98/3. Funding strategy for the United Nations Development Programme

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on moving towards a sustainable funding strategy for the United Nations Development Programme (DP/1997/CRP.23) and the comments made during the Executive Board discussion;

2. Reaffirms that core resources are the bedrock of the United Nations Development Programme and that they ensure the universality, predictability, neutrality and multilateralism of the Programme as well as the ability to respond in a flexible way to the needs of programme countries, in particular those of the least developed countries and low-income countries;

3. Notes with concern that, despite significant improvements in efficiency at the United Nations Development Programme, core resources declined during the previous programming cycles and fall short of the initial planning figure set in decision 95/23 and of the increasing needs of programme countries; and notes with appreciation the contribution of programme countries to core resources of the Programme; and notes that, despite contributions from a new set of member countries, core funding remains dependent on a limited number of donors; that to manage this funding shortfall, the Administrator extended the implementation phase of some country programmes; and that further programme delays may affect programme results and the credibility of the Programme as a reliable development partner;

4. Recognizes that core and non-core resources are components of the United Nations Development Programme funding; that urgent action by the Executive Board is needed to deal with the funding situation in the short and longer terms; that a clearer profile of the role of the Programme at all levels is needed; and that, simultaneously, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/227 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/59, the Executive Board needs to set specific and realistic targets for core resources and decide on a future funding mechanism to make the funding of the Programme more secure and predictable;

5. Recognizes that positive results of the efforts to narrow the focus of United Nations Development Programme activities will play an important role in mobilizing core resources for the Programme in the future;

6. Requests the Administrator to present to the Executive Board, at its second regular session 1998, a three-year financial forecast outlining the financial commitments as of 31 December 1997 entered into by the United Nations Development Programme as a result of Board decisions on country cooperation frameworks, regional and global programmes, and other policy, administrative, and reform measures; and to ensure that the financial implications of all future programming, administrative, and policy recommendations brought for Board approval are presented to the Board prior to their adoption;

I. SHORT-TERM ACTION

7. Urges all member countries, in particular the donors and other countries in a position to do so, to contribute additional funds to United Nations Development Programme core resources and to make early payment of their contributions;

8. Requests the Administrator to ensure that, in the short term, administrative costs will be maintained at levels currently agreed upon, as per decision 97/24, and that all additional contributions to core resources will be used exclusively to implement United Nations Development Programme development activities;

II. DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGY FOR UNDP

9. Decides, taking fully into account discussions in other forums, to convene an open-ended, ad hoc working group on the United Nations Development Programme funding strategy and requests the President of the Bureau of the United Nations Development Programme Executive Board to appoint a Bureau Vice-President to serve as chairperson, and requests the Secretary of the Executive Board, and other relevant Programme divisions, to facilitate and support the working group deliberations;

10. Decides that the mandate of the open-ended, ad hoc working group shall be:

(a) A review of various funding mechanisms as well as other options for the United Nations Development Programme so as to place the funding of the Programme on a predictable, assured, and continuous basis, taking into account various budgetary processes in contributing countries, as well as the need for more equitable burden-sharing among donor countries;

(b) Development of guidelines and criteria to set funding targets for the United Nations Development Programme core resources, based in particular on: (i) the goals and priorities of the Programme as specified in decisions 94/14 and 95/23; (ii) the development needs and priorities of programme countries as identified in country cooperation frameworks; (iii) projected core contributions; (iv) the funding role of the Programme within the larger context of international development financing; and (v) existing long-term commitments and strategies;

11. Acknowledges the relevance of upcoming Executive Board discussions on the successor programming arrangements, including the review of the current eligibility criteria for the allocation of core resources to programme countries, and the need for a clear institutional profile to increase public awareness and generate support, and to develop an effective communication and information strategy to be used in advocacy work for the United Nations Development Programme;

12. Requests the Administrator to ensure that close coordination and consultation with similar efforts undertaken by other United Nations funds and programmes will be provided for throughout the work of the working group to ensure, to the extent possible, consistency in approaches and mechanisms adopted by the Executive Boards of United Nations funds and programmes to respond to the mandates of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

13. Requests the President of the Executive Board to report to the Board on the progress achieved by the open-ended, ad hoc working group, at each upcoming session of the Board with a view to adopting a decision on a sustainable funding strategy at its third regular session 1998.

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211. One delegation requested the working group to include discussion of the financing of the resident coordinator system. Another delegation, also speaking on behalf of another, referred to paragraph 10 (b) of the decision, which referred to the long-term commitment and strategy. That delegation expressed the view that the issue of financing of the resident coordinator system should not be considered in the working group but in another context that had been agreed to in the informals. Another speaker emphasized the need for the working group to be flexible in its mandate.

VII. OTHER MATTERS

Integrated Framework for Technical Assistance to Support Trade-related Activities in Least Developed Countries

212. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy introduced the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance as contained in document DP/1998/CRP.4, and a background paper on UNDP follow-up to World Trade Organization (WTO) initiatives for least developed countries (DP/1998/CRP.5). The Framework had been presented and endorsed by the World Trade Organization High-Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development (Geneva, 27-28 October 1997). At that meeting, the Executive Boards of the United Nations specialized agencies that had worked with WTO on drafting the Framework, including that of UNDP, were asked to endorse it.

213. Several delegations took the floor to welcome the work done by UNDP in the area of trade-related technical assistance and supported the endorsement of the Framework by the Executive Board. The speakers encouraged UNDP to play a

coordinating role in implementing the Framework, in cooperation with other United Nations organizations and within the objectives of sustainable human development. One example would be facilitation of country needs assessments. Round-table meetings devoted to trade were encouraged, within the regular round-table process.

214. Several delegations underlined the need for the least developed countries (LDCs) to direct the process. UNDP could collaborate with LDCs to determine priorities and costs, one speaker suggested. Many emphasized the need for excellent coordination among the agencies involved in implementing the Framework.

215. The representatives of programme countries taking the floor expressed gratitude for the contribution of UNDP to development in their countries and hoped that UNDP could play a positive role within the parameters of the Framework. Adequate support from donors was necessary in implementation of the Framework.

216. UNDP was encouraged to contribute to the discussion at the High-Level segment of the Economic and Social Council, which would be devoted to trade and development. A query was raised as to whether the Framework would be incorporated in future country cooperation frameworks.

217. Several speakers requested UNDP to keep the Executive Board informed of follow-up to the endorsement of the Framework.

218. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy thanked the Executive Board for its support. She noted that UNDP would pursue its interventions in support to trade within the sustainable human development framework outlined in document DP/1998/5 on narrowing the focus. She agreed that the issue was country-driven and that, in that regard, UNDP had a role in capacity-building. Interventions in the trade development sector would be included in the country cooperation frameworks where applicable.

219. The Technical Adviser on Trade in the Management Development and Governance Division responded to the comments raised. He noted that the theme of trade would be included in the round-table meeting for Chad, scheduled for May 1998. Resident representatives would be informed of the outcome of the High-Level Meeting and would be asked to include the theme of trade, when possible, in round-table meetings.

220. With regard to coordination, he noted that the participating agencies met regularly and had been working out a division of labour to follow up the Framework. In the next meeting, the needs assessments of ten countries and establishment of indicators for follow-up would be reviewed. Each country would determine its own priorities and costing. That would be followed by a needs assessment and an integrated response.

221. The Executive Board endorsed the Integrated Framework for Technical Assistance to Support Trade-related Activities in Least Developed Countries (DP/1998/CRP.4) and took note of the report of UNDP follow-up to World Trade Organization initiatives for least developed countries (DP/1998/CRP.5).

International Vaccine Institute

222. One delegation informed the Executive Board that the International Vaccine Institute (IVI), initiated by UNDP, had been officially launched in October 1997.

223. The Institute was the world's first international institute dedicated to vaccine science and was established to address the magnitude of child deaths from infectious diseases, mainly in developing countries, which were largely preventable by vaccination. As of the present time, 30 countries and the World Health Organization were signatories to the Establishment Agreement of the IVI. The IVI was the first international organization hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea. Every effort had been made by the Government of the Republic of Korea to provide full support to the Institute. It was expected that the Institute would enjoy the full participation and support of all concerned countries and relevant international organizations, especially UNDP and its Executive Board.

Administrative questions

224. One delegation requested information regarding the number of staff working at UNDP headquarters. Progress reports on the integrated management information system and on discussions on common services with UNFPA and UNICEF were requested for the annual session 1998.

225. The Associate Administrator stated that as a result of the growth in non-core funding, additional staff were working at UNDP headquarters. In addition, there had been an increase in the number of junior professional officers at headquarters. An update would be provided at the annual session. He noted that UNDP was implementing the integrated management information system in tranches. The issue of common services was being discussed within a working group of the United Nations Development Group as well as within United Nations-wide common services groups organized under the auspices of the Department of Administration and Management in the United Nations Secretariat.

Global mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification

226. The Director of the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNSO) presented an oral report on the outcome of the First Conference of the Parties (COP) (Rome, 29 September to 10 October 1997) relating to the Global Mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).

227. The COP adopted a number of key decisions, including those on the location of the Permanent Secretariat of the CCD, the programme and the budget of the secretariat, the establishment of the Committee on Science and Technology and arrangements for the Global Mechanism. With regard to the Global Mechanism, there were four substantive outcomes: (a) an agreement reached on its functions; (b) a decision to set up a collaborative institutional arrangement involving UNDP, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Bank; (c) a decision to house the location of the Global Mechanism in Rome at IFAD and for UNDP to designate its head; and (d) UNDP is expected to play a lead supportive role for operational activities, in particular at the

country level. With regard to the last point, UNDP, in particular through UNSO, was expected to: (a) provide technical backstopping to national action programmes, the subregional action programmes processes, and the establishment and operation of national desertification funds; (b) work on drought preparedness and mitigation, environmental/desertification information systems, and indicators, as well as special thematic initiatives in the context of the CCD; (c) support the substantive work of the Global Mechanism within the collaborative institutional arrangement; (d) support the Global Mechanism management; (e) mobilize catalytic resources through the UNDP Trust Fund to Combat Desertification and Drought; and (f) promote activities under UNDP core and non-core funding for combating drought and desertification.

228. The Director noted that UNDP had already begun working with IFAD to designate the head of the Global Mechanism and had reached agreement on the Profile and Selection procedure. Candidates for the post would soon be identified.

229. In conclusion, the Director noted that 1998 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of UNSO. He expressed appreciation to countries that had provided support through UNSO to countries affected by drought and desertification. Experience gained by UNSO since its inception enabled the Office to play an important role to support efforts of countries to implement the CCD. The CCD provided an innovative framework for a new set of actions at the national, subregional, regional and global levels to reverse land degradation and build sustainable livelihoods in some of the world's poorest countries and regions. The new partnerships that the CCD was seeking to build at all levels would no doubt be the cornerstone for the success of future actions.

230. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on the results of the first session of the Conference of Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification.

Report on Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinating Board

231. The Director of External Relations of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) gave an oral report to the Executive Board on the outcome of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) ad hoc thematic meeting held in Nairobi from 16 to 18 November 1997. She emphasized that it was essential that the governing bodies of the co-sponsors of UNAIDS take an interest in the work of the inter-agency body whose purpose was to lead and strengthen the United Nations system in the area of HIV/AIDS.

232. She informed the Executive Board that the HIV/AIDS epidemic was growing in many parts of the world. There were now over 30 million people living with HIV, including 20 million in sub-Saharan Africa. Over one half of new infections were in women and many children were born with HIV. New therapeutic anti-viral drugs were becoming available but were costly for the developing world. The gap between developed and developing countries in that regard needed to be reduced. Prevention and alleviation of the impact of the epidemic must also be supported.

233. The fifth meeting of the PCB was the first to concentrate on thematic issues and also the first to be held in a programme country affected by the epidemic. The two thematic areas discussed were the United Nations system at the country level and access to drugs for HIV/AIDS. The PCB focused on the responsibility given to each of the partners, including donors, Governments, the United Nations system, and non-governmental organizations. The Executive Board sought more guidance through the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board on aspects of country level activities, including participation, earmarking of resources and support for coordination. Performance guidelines for country representatives should also cover actions regarding HIV/AIDS, particularly in the country-level theme groups. Coherent policies towards the work of UNAIDS in the governing bodies of the co-sponsors was also sought. The Director noted that a retreat, including senior managers and country-based staff, would be held in March 1998.

234. With regard to access to drugs, the PCB had called on UNAIDS co-sponsors to collaborate on a step-by-step approach to varying situations throughout the world. The PCB urged UNAIDS to increase prevention efforts and requested Member States to make major efforts to develop vaccines.

235. The Director noted that UNAIDS would continue to report to each meeting of the Executive Board.

236. One delegation encouraged all partners to work more closely together, at both headquarters and country levels. The delegation urged donors to have consistent policies towards the work of UNAIDS in all the governing bodies of the co-sponsors. Cooperation among the co-sponsors at the country level could be improved. In that regard, resident coordinators should have the lead in the United Nations theme groups and UNDP should be encouraged to undertake an active coordination role, as well as technical and monitoring roles. Coordination between headquarters and the country offices also needed to be improved, in particular through guidance from headquarters in policy and technical areas. UNDP was requested to report to the annual session 1998 on the progress as well as the problems encountered in its role as a co-sponsor of UNAIDS.

237. Another delegation stated that it was crucial that the co-sponsors take active responsibility for the work and impact of UNAIDS. Some of the conclusions contained in the report of the PCB meeting were quite relevant to UNDP, including the need to develop clear communications between headquarters and the regional and local offices of UNDP with regard to the theme groups and to HIV/AIDS programme issues. It was essential for UNDP to ensure that its resident representatives were fully able to make and support decisions benefiting inter-agency cooperation.

238. One speaker requested that more details on the operations of UNAIDS at the country level be provided.

239. The Director thanked the Executive Board for its comments and noted that all partners were engaged in a common enterprise to overcome problems. Many issues concerning the operations of UNAIDS were linked to its being a new idea in the United Nations context. UNAIDS would report to the Board at its subsequent session on the outcome of the retreat and at the annual session on the results of the next meeting of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations.

240. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on the outcome of the ad hoc thematic meeting of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinating Board, held in Nairobi from 16 to 18 November 1997.

TRAC 1.1.3 resources

241. The Associate Administrator provided an update on the status of allocations of the new target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.3 mechanism for countries in special development situations. He noted that in accordance with Executive Board decision 95/23, five per cent of UNDP core resources had been earmarked for that purpose. The use of TRAC line 1.1.3 would in fact be fully reported on as an integral part of the review of successor programming arrangements to be undertaken later in the year. There were, however, some trends that were emerging.

242. First, the demand for that type of assistance far outweighed the supply. The volume of requests for support to special development initiatives that had been received from programme countries since the establishment of TRAC line 1.1.3 clearly indicated that the need for such resources far exceeded their availability. The current level of allocations was $119 million, out of an authorized programming level of $142 million for the period 1997-2000. A second trend was that the nature of that part of the UNDP programme made it more difficult to manage overall country income-level distribution. For TRAC line 1.1.3 specifically, the current distribution of allocations was as follows: 59 per cent to least developed countries, 41 per cent to non-least developed countries, 73 per cent to low-income countries and 27 per cent to middle-income countries.

243. The Associate Administrator thus drew attention to the significant volume of TRAC line 1.1.3 resources that had been allocated in support to important peace processes and in assisting countries, through various interventions, in their efforts to move from conflict to non-conflict situations. Funding for strategic planning exercises, capacity-building for mine action, reconciliation and more general governance-related programmes and area development programmes had featured prominently in the approvals.

244. The need to provide support to post-conflict peace-building, unlike poverty alleviation per se, in which UNDP had been traditionally involved, was by its nature less restricted to low-income countries. Similarly, all programme countries, irrespective of their income levels, were prone to the incidence of sudden crises and disasters and hence were eligible for support from the related provisions within TRAC line 1.1.3 resources. UNDP looked forward to exploring the issues relating to TRAC line 1.1.3 at the third regular session 1998.

245. One delegation requested further information on the extent to which TRAC line 1.1.3 funds were used to finance preventive activities.

246. The Associate Administrator stated that it was difficult to cite exactly which UNDP activities funded through TRAC line 1.1.3 had been truly preventive. He noted the UNDP activities in governance that strengthened those Governments with fragile systems to help them deal with justice, equity and participation issues. The strengthening of social structures whose weaknesses had led to

conflict could help to prevent a recurrence of conflict. UNDP also helped to sustain peace agreements by trying to promote a continuation of peace. In other cases, UNDP had provided forums for disputing parties, created sustainable livelihoods or helped displaced refugees.

247. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on TRAC line 1.1.3 resources.

VIII. JOINT MEETING OF UNDP/UNFPA AND UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARDS

248. On Monday afternoon, 26 January 1998, the President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board opened the first joint meeting of the UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards. He noted that the idea of convening a joint meeting had been discussed for some time, and was finally coming to fruition. In late 1997, the bureaux of the two Boards had agreed to hold a joint half-day meeting on the topic of the overall United Nations reform and its impact on funds and programmes. The Viet Nam country team was invited to share their experience as a pilot country for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The presentation would serve as a preliminary indication of the impact of reform at the country level. The respective Boards would continue to monitor the progress of reform in the future.

249. The Resident Coordinator in Viet Nam introduced the UNFPA Country Representative and the UNICEF Representative. He then gave a brief overview of the context in which the United Nations system was working in Viet Nam, concluding that while the UNDAF process was taking place in favourable circumstances, there were lessons to be learned for other countries. Eleven United Nations agencies were represented in Viet Nam.

250. A short film on the United Nations cooperation in Viet Nam was shown.

251. The Resident Coordinator stated that the UNDAF was seen as a valuable tool to build consensus among the United Nations system and identify concrete joint activities. The formulation exercise had begun with a two-day retreat of the United Nations country team (with participation of the World Bank) in October 1997. Consensus was reached on the four focus areas for future United Nations system activities in Viet Nam. Besides the wishes expressed at the retreat to produce a good document, it was realized that the UNDAF formulation exercise was also a good team-building process. A mission statement for the United Nations system in Viet Nam was formulated, stating that the overall mission was to help Viet Nam in its fight against poverty through building capacities to design and carry out programmes that enlarged choices and opportunities for disadvantaged communities, families and individuals. A working group had been charged with facilitating the formulation process, supported by groups for each of the four focus areas.

252. The UNFPA Country Representative informed the Executive Boards of the major milestones in the process to develop an UNDAF in Viet Nam. He noted that a total of 144 indicators had been identified in the provisional list, out of which 30-40 were selected as priorities. Issues papers were produced on follow-up to world conferences and integrated in the UNDAF through the identification

of common priorities. The first draft of the UNDAF, scheduled to be ready in February 1998, would be subject to further discussions and then revised by the target date of April 1998. The process would take at least 26 weeks, longer than the 13 weeks indicated in the provisional guidelines. Several rounds of consultations were needed and there was a need for strong leadership to guide the process. United Nations specialized agencies with limited staff and resources had felt stretched by the process.

253. The UNICEF Representative spoke on current collaborative efforts of the United Nations system in Viet Nam. They included UNAIDS, a poverty eradication project in Ha Giang, a community development programme in Ky Son, the Basic Life Skills Education programme, and the Safe Motherhood Initiative. Tasks that lay ahead for the future included the identification of common priorities, delineating responsibilities among United Nations agencies, reinforcing the United Nations team spirit among staff, increasing programme coordination, strengthening advocacy, and collaborative resource mobilization.

254. The Resident Coordinator concluded the presentation with an overview of the lessons learned: in terms of operational aspects, the preparatory time was substantially longer than the 13 weeks indicated in the provisional guidelines; the use and timing of the use of facilitators should be decided upon by the country team at the very beginning of the process; consultancy services should be used selectively; the guidelines should be applied flexibly; additional human resources were required during the actual formulation phase; and reforms at programming level should be followed by operational reforms. He thanked the Government of Denmark for seconding a person to the Resident Coordinator's office to work with, among other things, the UNDAF formulation exercise. With regard to lessons learned in policy perspectives, he noted that partnership with the host Government was essential; that the UNDAF must be seen in the proper perspective; that the issues of United Nations reform were not new and that there was a delicate balance between the aim of increased cooperation while maintaining individual agency profiles. It was also noted that the UNDAF might eventually replace some existing programming documents currently used and that reform at the country level should be adequately accompanied by reform at the headquarters level.

255. The delegation of Viet Nam thanked the country team for sharing its experiences. The speaker underlined that the lessons learned in the Viet Nam experience would be useful to other countries. He also emphasized the need for the United Nations Development Group to ensure the distinctive identities of organizations. While supporting the objectives of the UNDAF, he noted that the concept was not fully completed and the conclusions on its full impact were not yet known.

256. Many delegations welcomed the joint meeting and expressed their gratitude for the presentations by the country team. The work at the country level was seen as another step forward in creating more effective and more efficient United Nations operations. Support for the Secretary-General's reform package was expressed. Speakers commented positively on the inclusion of the follow-up to global conferences in the UNDAF. Many delegations urged that the lessons learned be incorporated in future UNDAF exercises. Several speakers supported the replacement of some of the existing programming instruments with the UNDAF.

The broad participation of the United Nations system in the exercise was welcomed. The need for the Bretton Woods institutions to participate in the UNDAF process was emphasized. Some speakers referred to the issue of including bilateral donors or the private sector at a later stage. Another speaker emphasized the need for the United Nations House to be established wherever possible. More ideas would be put forward during the triennial policy review of operational activities.

257. Some speakers expressed concern about the length of the UNDAF process and the extra time and resources required and asked whether any steps had been taken by the United Nations to accelerate the process in other countries. One speaker noted that the secondment of government personnel to work on UNDAF matters should not lead to a situation similar to that in the United Nations peacekeeping operations, where government personnel had been assigned to core functions on non-reimbursable loans. He also requested information on whether joint resource mobilization would result in an increase to core resources. Queries were raised regarding how the UNDAF would accelerate capacity-building in Viet Nam, how the United Nations country team planned to harmonize or unify programmes under the UNDAF, and on which agencies were involved in the exercise in the 19 pilot countries. Information was requested on how UNDAF would facilitate joint efforts in the programme approach in dealing with problems, whether there was parallel financing for joint action, on how progress and benefits would be measured, and what would happen to the parts of the programme that did not fit into the UNDAF.

258. Several speakers favoured the convening of joint meetings of the two Boards on a regular basis in the future. One speaker requested the Bureau to develop proposals for future joint meetings linked to matters such as the common country assessment.

259. The Resident Coordinator stated that the UNDAF benefited from direct involvement of the Government. He noted that the guidelines were still provisional and that one issue to revisit might be how to associate Governments more closely with the exercise. If other programming instruments were superseded by the UNDAF, then the Government would have to sign the document. He emphasized that representatives of specialized agencies in Viet Nam were very keen to participate in the exercise. Mobilization of international NGOs and bilateral donors to participate in the exercise was foreseen.

260. The Country Representative of UNFPA stated that he expected that the costs would be reduced as the process progressed. He added that the team strongly supported national execution and the sector approach, as well as working with the international financial institutions, the specialized agencies, and the major bilateral agencies.

261. The UNICEF Representative explained that agencies participating in the process were maintaining their profiles.

262. The Resident Coordinator underlined that the support of countries active in Viet Nam was needed, noting that 25 of the countries represented on the two Boards were present in the country. The capitals needed to support the

programme approach in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to ensure coordination and quality participation.

263. Following the presentation by the Viet Nam team and comments by delegations, the Executive Heads of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA made statements. All three underlined the importance of this first joint session of the two Executive Boards and of the progress made to date with UNDAF as exemplified by the United Nations team in Viet Nam.

264. The UNDP Administrator, who also is the Chair of UNDG, said that UNDAF, which is at the heart of the Secretary-General's reforms, is marked by a shift from information-sharing between funds and programmes to generalized, goal-oriented collaboration at country level. Without national support, however, UNDAF would not work, and it had to build on and reflect national development priorities. Key to the process was the ability of the resident coordinator system to draw on the mandates of all agencies; staff in a country must be responsible not just for their own agencies' work, but for that of the United Nations system as a whole in that country. At headquarters, UNDG had established a global support system with trained facilitators and global support personnel.

265. All specialized agencies had been invited to participate in UNDAF, and a review to be undertaken in Mali and Viet Nam would compare UNDAF with the World Bank's country assessment exercise. He thanked a number of Governments for their financial support to UNDAF, including those of Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

266. Responding to questions about what current programming arrangements could possibly be replaced by UNDAF, he suggested the UNDP advisory note, which was used as a basis for programme formulation with Governments. Full incorporation of global conference action points would be a hallmark of a successful UNDAF.

267. The Administrator outlined the activities of the United Nations development team over the past year. For example, both UNDG and the Executive Committee had been established and met monthly. UNDG had provided guidance to resident coordinators on the follow-up to international conferences. Both UNICEF and UNFPA had seconded staff to the United Nations Development Group Office (DGO), and the World Food Programme was expected to do so shortly. Finally, the Director of DGO and the inter-agency subgroup on common premises and services were responsible for accelerating progress in identifying 50 countries that could host a United Nations House.

268. He also described a number of steps that had been taken to strengthen the resident coordinator system, in consultation and collaboration with UNDG members. These included improved selection procedures; a new, competency-based assessment; and a separate performance evaluation of current resident coordinators, in which all UNDG members and specialized agencies were participating. General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992 had begun the process of going beyond UNDP for resident coordinators; in 1992, only one resident coordinator had come from outside UNDP, but 30 per cent of those recommended most recently were from other funds and programmes. He had instructed all resident coordinators to represent all United Nations specialized

agencies even-handedly, to keep their roles as UNDP resident representative and resident coordinator separate, and to resolve any conflicts between the two in favour of the system as a whole. In addition, extra resources would be made available for implementing new procedures for the annual reports of the resident coordinators.

269. The UNICEF Executive Director said that the joint session demonstrated that United Nations reform was real and that it was being mainstreamed. The presentation by the Viet Nam country team had shown the excellent quality of the staff working in all the funds and programmes in Viet Nam, and reflected honestly the strengths, potential and challenges of UNDAF. Field-level coordination had not begun with UNDAF, which was a work in progress, and there was always room for improvement. Resource implications - both human and financial - had to be considered. It was very early in the process, and while the UNDAF process had to move along, it was too soon for any evaluation. In developing UNDAF, it was important to ensure wide participation by the funds, programmes and agencies and by government partners.

270. Concerning coordination issues, she said that UNICEF was a member of both UNDG and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs. There had been a lot of progress in the last year. The challenges of coordination at headquarters were complex because of the different needs of the field-based agencies and the more centralized Secretariat departments. Two areas where that was evident were procurement and information technology. For example, the United Nations would most likely be best served through a common framework for procurement rather than a single service entity; that could result in significant savings in terms of efficiency. Many improvements in operations could be achieved with existing rules and regulations, not all of which needed to be changed.

271. The resident coordinator system was moving towards genuine, system-wide representation, and UNICEF would participate fully in the appraisal process, she said. One issue requiring further exploration was that of other agencies' representatives assuming the responsibilities of resident coordinator where it would remain a combined function.

272. In closing, she said that a thorough evaluation of UNDAF would be required to ensure that it provided "added value", although she was sure that would be the case.

273. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration), UNFPA, spoke on behalf of the UNFPA Executive Director, who was unable to attend the session. He expressed full support for the reform initiatives and said that while the UNDAF pilot phase was still ongoing, a number of points should be noted. Overall, the experience was relatively positive and there was government support. UNDAF was useful for team-building and for its participatory process, but the exercise was time-consuming and resource-intensive, which had implications for agencies with limited staff, including UNFPA. UNDAF would lead to stronger country programmes, and that would need to be reflected in internal staff performance appraisals. Finally, overall coordination processes had to be streamlined, so that each agency might have to examine its existing programme requirements and procedures. In this regard, the UNDAF exercise should take into account the data and other materials, including guidelines, prepared by the

ACC Task Force on Basic Social Services for All, chaired by the Executive Director, UNFPA.

274. For there to be successful implementation of UNDAF, there must be an understanding by the resident coordinator of his/her role, as well as the commitment of all participating organizations, a participatory approach and a response to countries' needs and priorities. It would mean maximizing the comparative advantage of the United Nations system, and respect for the mandate of each organization and for cross-cutting issues such as population and gender. There must be ownership of the process by the country team; involvement of the national authorities, including NGOs; and wide international participation, including that of United Nations specialized agencies and international financial institutions. The process must also pay attention to issues of international coordination for follow-up to international conferences.

275. UNFPA was an active member of UNDG and had seconded senior staff to DGO, he said. UNFPA supported the resident coordinators as representatives of the Secretary-General, and the resident coordinators must be strong and impartial advocates of all agencies.

276. One delegation, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that the establishment of UNDG was obviously intended to maintain and reinforce the distinctive identities of the participating agencies, while encouraging coordination and integration at headquarters and in the field. However, the members of the group, as the main recipients of development cooperation, were primarily concerned with the quality, efficiency and volume of assistance rather than with institutional arrangements. Simplicity of programme delivery was important, but they did not see any merit in pursuing integration as an end in itself. As for UNDAF, it might be premature to assess its successes and failures. In drawing on the lessons of the pilot projects, it would be important to take into account the views of the recipient Governments. In discussing the reform proposals, the group of countries had earlier addressed the question of counterpart arrangement of UNDAF at the country level and the mechanism for the presentation of credentials of the resident coordinator to the host Government. Therefore, the implementation of the reform should take into account the specific needs of each region and country. Finally, the Secretary-General had been requested to propose a new system of core resources, and any proposal in that regard should not increase or add any new burden to the developing countries, nor incur conditionality.

277. Delegations commented on the UNDAF process, with one suggesting that UNDAF was not an end in itself, but should be in line with the agencies' management improvement exercises and avoid duplication and overlap. Addressing the issue of costs, a speaker said that the purpose of the pilot phase was to identify best practices; with higher cost-efficiency as an objective, the initial investment might pay off.

278. Some speakers welcomed the work towards collaborative programmes and greater coordination, but questions were raised about the relationship between the different instruments of field-level coordination - the country strategy note, UNDAF and the strategic framework - and about the role UNDG could play in harmonizing these field-level mechanisms. One delegation said that UNDAF was

already changing the programming process in the field and that the field should push headquarters in this regard. A speaker asked about the relationship between the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and CCPOQ, and about the type of cooperation being undertaken with the World Bank. Another speaker cited such challenges as the difficulty of reconciling programme objectives; the lack of indicators for all priorities; different guidance from headquarters from each agency; and the weak interest of the Bretton Woods institutions. A delegation stressed the importance of including the specialized agencies and bilateral donors. Another delegation said that Viet Nam was an ideal case for UNDAF, but other countries were less ideal, and there was a need for flexibility in the field.

279. It was said that according to the provisional guidelines, only the United Nations country team would approve UNDAF, but the Government also should approve any assistance framework. It was asked if there would be a need for a special cooperation agreement with Governments, and what would be the terms of reference and responsibility of Governments in the UNDAF process. The references in the guidelines to consultation with NGOs and donors required elaboration, and the wording on common services and the division of labour between agencies was open to interpretation, according to some. (It was asked to what extent UNDAF could be linked to the common services exercise, and if there should be contemplation of administrative integration at the headquarters level.)

280. A number of speakers addressed the role of the Executive Boards and/or the issue of future joint sessions. One speaker said that UNDAF required the exchange of information between the Executive Boards, including the possible harmonization of their programmes of work. He suggested that UNDAF and the pilot projects be discussed at a special inter-sessional meeting of the Executive Boards. Another delegation said that the choice of UNDAF for that session was logical although other topics would also be appropriate. It was asked if from now on, there would be regular joint briefings on the state of UNDAF.

281. The representative of UNAIDS said that hers was unique among the "theme group" agencies because it was able to provide some catalytic resources and had learned a lot in the process. This had been the case in Viet Nam. There must be consistency between the positions of headquarters and the field, and there was a need for some shared resources to move the process from dialogue to programming.

282. In summing up, the resident coordinator in Viet Nam said that UNDAF should be country- and field-driven. It was too early for evaluations, and the country teams would advise when they were ready. His team was happy to work with other country teams and would do so once its first document had been produced. UNDAF would be open to Governments, donors, NGOs and civil society, or it would not exist. It must be actively open to bilateral agencies. The guidelines were not yet final, and teams would continue to communicate their views to headquarters. It must be an open process.

283. The President of the UNICEF Executive Board said that the session had provided much food for thought for both Executive Boards and for the Economic and Social Council.

98/4. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1998

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the first regular session 1998 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Elected the following Bureau for 1998:

President	H.E. Mr. Jacob Botwe Wilmot (Ghana)
Vice-President	Dr. Atul Khare (India)
Vice-President	Mr. Volodymyr Reshetnyak (Ukraine)
Vice-President	H.E. Dr. John W. Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)
Vice-President	Mr. Alan March (Australia)

Approved the agenda and work plan for its first regular session 1998 (DP/1998/L.1) as orally amended;

Approved the report of the third regular session 1997 (DP/1998/1);

Approved the annual work plan 1998 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board as orally amended and annexed to the present decision;

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Second regular session 1998:	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998:	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998:	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the following tentative schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1999:

First regular session 1999:	11-15 January 1999
Second regular session 1999:	5-9 April 1999
Annual session 1999:	14-25 June 1999 (New York)
Third regular session 1999:	13-17 September 1999

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the second regular session 1998 of the Board, as listed in the annexed work plan;

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 2: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF AUDITORS

Took note of the UNDP report on follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (DP/1996/4);

Took note of the UNFPA report on follow-up of the report of the Board of Auditors for 1994-1995: status of implementation of recommendations (DP/FPA/1998/1);

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 3: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the following country and subregional programmes:

Paraguay (DP/FPA/CP/195);

China (DP/FPA/CP/196);

Nicaragua (DP/FPA/CP/197);

Egypt (DP/FPA/CP/198);

Algeria (DP/FPA/CP/199);

Pacific subregion (DP/FPA/CP/200);

Requested the Executive Director to report regularly to the Executive Board on the implementation of significant elements of the above programmes, including progress in meeting the principles and goals of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 4: UNDP 2001

Took note of the oral report of the Administrator on the implementation of change management;

Adopted decision 98/1 of 23 January 1998 on narrowing the focus of United Nations Development Programme interventions;

ITEM 5: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Africa (1997-2001) (DP/1998/6);

Approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (1997-2001) (DP/1998/7 and Corr.1);

Approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific (1997-2001) (DP/1998/8);

Approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (1997-1999) (DP/1998/9);

Approved the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean (1997-1999) (DP/1998/10);

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks and country programme extension:

I

First country cooperation framework for Cape Verde (DP/CCF/CVI/1);

First country cooperation framework for Ghana (DP/CCF/GHA/1);

First country cooperation framework for Mozambique (DP/CCF/MOZ/1);

Second extension of the sixth country programme for Kenya (DP/CP/KEN/6/EXTENSION II);

II

First country cooperation framework for Algeria (DP/CCF/ALG/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (DP/CCF/LIB/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for the Cook Islands (DP/CCF/CKI/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Republic of Korea (DP/CCF/ROK/1);

First country cooperation framework for Tokelau (DP/CCF/TOK/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for Guatemala (DP/CCF/GUA/1);

First country cooperation framework for Nicaragua (DP/CCF/NIC/1);

Took note of the report of the Administrator on UNDP assistance to Myanmar contained in document DP/1998/11 and decided to consider, at its annual session

1998, a proposal for future UNDP assistance to Myanmar in conformity with Governing Council decision 93/21 and Executive Board decision 96/1;

ITEM 6: UNDP: RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Adopted decision 98/2 of 23 January 1998 on the review of policy implications of change and non-core funding;

Adopted decision 98/3 of 23 January 1998 on funding strategy for the United Nations Development Programme;

Decided to postpone consideration of the report on the review of the round-table process (DP/1998/CRP.2) to its annual session 1998;

ITEM 7: OTHER MATTERS

Endorsed the Integrated Framework for Technical Assistance to Support Trade-related Activities in Least Developed Countries (DP/1998/CRP.4);

Took note of the report on UNDP follow-up to World Trade Organization initiatives for least developed countries (DP/1998/CRP.5);

Took note of the oral report on the results of the first session of the Conference of Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification;

Took note of the oral report on the outcome of the ad hoc thematic meeting of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Coordinating Board held in Nairobi from 16 to 18 November 1997;

Took note of the oral report by the Associate Administrator on the utilization of resources for target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.3.

23 January 1998

Annex

DRAFT WORK PLAN FOR THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IN 1998

INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision 96/25, the Executive Board decided, inter alia, to introduce an annual work plan for the Executive Board. The present document contains a list of priority issues for UNDP and UNFPA for 1998, and proposes a draft work plan for the Executive Board, taking into account these priority issues as well as the legislation and guidelines established by the Executive Board and discussions held at the third regular session 1997 of the Executive Board.

UNDP

2. For UNDP, the biennium 1998-1999 will be one of implementation and consolidation of legislation adopted and initiatives taken during the current biennium. Priority will be given to implementation of the change management process and the new programming framework, as well as to the mobilization of support and resources for poverty eradication programmes. Within the change management process, the focus will be on three major areas: enhanced country focus; effectiveness and impact; and efficiency, accountability and good management.

3. As decided by the Executive Board in 1996, the reports on special funds managed by UNDP are considered on a rotational basis. In 1998, it is proposed that the Board review the report on the United Nations Volunteers.

UNFPA

4. UNFPA priorities for 1998 are fivefold: (a) to increase the Fund's resource base on a more predictable, assured and continuous basis; (b) to continue to evaluate and to increase the effectiveness of programmes throughout the world; (c) to continue to implement new programme priorities and the new approach for resource allocation as contained in Executive Board decisions 95/15 and 96/15, respectively; (d) to improve the manner in which the Fund's programmes address absorptive capacity and resource utilization in programme countries; and (e) to collaborate in the implementation of United Nations system-wide reform efforts. UNFPA will also collaborate with other relevant bodies in preparing for the ICPD + 5 initiatives scheduled for 1999.

UNDP PRIORITY ISSUES FOR 1998

ISSUE	FOLLOW-UP	REPORT TYPE	SESSION
A. Implementation of UNDP 2001	UNDP 2001: Progress report and strategy for implementing next steps, ensuring synergy with the United Nations reforms (97/15 para 21)	Oral	First and annual
	Analysis of the introduction of subregional resource facilities (97/15 para 16)	Official	Annual
B. Implementation of the new programming framework	Implementation strategy for each regional cooperation framework, including performance measurement methodology and timetable for mid-term appraisal	Official	First
	Review of implementation of the programming cycle	Official	Third
	Analysis of results in accelerating programme delivery and strategic options for the future	Official	Third
C. Ensuring programme quality	Strategy for narrowing UNDP priority areas of focus, building on the September 1997 workshop	Official	First
D. Funding strategies and outreach	Strategy for increasing UNDP core resources and creating a more sustainable funding base	CRP	First
	Assessment of lessons learned in mobilizing core as well as non-core resources and strategic options for the future	Official	First
	Options for improving the UNDP communication and information policy as a tool for mobilizing resources and increasing public awareness of UNDP value-added and impact	Official	Annual

UNFPA PRIORITY ISSUES FOR 1998

ISSUE	FOLLOW-UP	REPORT TYPE	SESSION
A. Increase resource base	Further develop resource strategy	Official a/	Annual
	Explore innovative funding mechanisms		
	Explore ways to ensure stable, predictable income		
B. Operationalization of core programme areas	Focus on adolescent reproductive health	Official a/	Annual
	Implement information strategy and advocacy activities	Oral	Annual
	Translate into specific activities at country level	Official b/	Second and third
	Promote involvement of national non-governmental organizations	Official a/	Annual
	Conduct thematic and programme evaluations	Official	Annual
C. Implementation of resource allocation approach	Country programming process	Official b/	Second, third and annual
D. Strengthening of internal oversight, audit and accountability	Increase number and quality of management audits and policy application reviews	Official a/	Annual
E. Preparations for ICPD + 5	Status report on preparations	Oral c/	Second and annual
F. Study of absorptive capacity and resource utilization in programme countries	Recommendations on concrete operational measures	Official	Annual

a/ Reported on in the context of the annual report.
b/ Reflected in country programmes and in the annual report.
c/ May be taken up at the second regular session and/or annual session.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA
TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1998

Table 1. First regular session 1998 (19-23 January 1998
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
				Election of the Bureau
	Official (DP/1998/L.1)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the third regular session 1997
	Official	I	½ day	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1997
	CRP*	A		Annual work plan 1998 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board (96/25)
2				UNFPA/UNDP SEGMENT
	Official	A/I		Updated overview of implementation of recommendations of the Board of Auditors (97/2 and 97/3
				UNFPA SEGMENT
3	Official	A	½ day	UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
				UNDP SEGMENT
4				UNDP 2001:
	Oral	I	½ day	Follow-up to decision 97/15 - Progress report
	Official	A		Narrowing the focus (97/15)

* An official report will be prepared in-session on the basis of the conference room paper.

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
5				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Implementation strategy papers for regional cooperation frameworks (97/9) Country cooperation frameworks Assistance to Myanmar (96/1)
6				RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
	CRP	A/I	½ days	UNDP resources and funding strategy options: "Towards a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP"
	CRP	I		Review of round-table process
	Official	A		Review of modalities of non-core resources (96/44) including follow-up to 97/15 para. 23
7			½ day	OTHER MATTERS
	Oral	I	½ day	UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF JOINT SESSION Exchange of views on the impact of overall United Nations reform on the funds and programmes

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1998 (20-24 April 1998)
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1998/L.2)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the first regular session 1998 Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1998
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official	A	½ day	REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
				UNDP SEGMENT
3	Official	A	1 day	Country cooperation frameworks and related matters
				UNFPA SEGMENT
4	Official	A	1½ days	Country programmes and related matters
5				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Oral	I	¼ day	Criteria and mechanisms for budget adjustments in the event of any significant shortfall in income (97/26)
6				TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES
	Oral	I	½ day	Review of "Report on an assessment of the TSS specialist posts at headquarters and regional levels" (97/27)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
7				STAFF TRAINING ACTIVITIES
	Oral	I	¼ day	Status report on the implementation of evaluation recommendations (97/29)
8				RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
	Official	A	½ day	Consequences of resource shortfalls in achieving ICPD goals (97/29)
9				OTHER MATTERS including:
	Oral	I	¼ day	Update on Coordinating Committee on Health Progress report on change management

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 3. Annual session 1998 (8-19 June 1998)
(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1998/L.3)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A		Report on the second regular session 1998 Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1998
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official	I	1½ days	REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1997 Introduction by the Executive Director Programme priorities and implementation Resource mobilization Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme/Global Initiative on Contraceptive Requirements Regional overview Statistical annex
3	Official	A	½ day	ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY AND FINANCIAL RESOURCE UTILIZATION (96/27)
4	Official	A	½ day	WORK PLAN AND REQUEST FOR PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY
5	Official	I	½ day	PERIODIC REPORT ON EVALUATION

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
6				INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
	Oral	I	½ day	Implementation of decision 97/13
7	Oral	I		REPORT ON STATUS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A		Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A	2 days	Main programme record, including reporting on special funds
	Official	I		Assistance to the Palestinian people
	Official	I		The United Nations New Agenda for Development in Africa and the Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I		Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit
	Official	I		Statistical annex
9	CRP	I		UNDP 2001: Follow up to decision 97/15 para 16 (Interim report on SURFs)
10	Official	I	½ day	Follow-up to the United Nations Reform including transfer to the United Nations Development Programme of the responsibilities of the Emergency Relief Coordinator for natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
11	Official	I	½ day	EVALUATION
12	Official	I/A	½ day	UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS
13			½ day	RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (including review of round-table process)
14	Official		½ day	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS (including Assistance to Myanmar)
15			½ day	COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION POLICY
	Official	I		Follow up to decision 97/17 (para 10)
16				UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
	Official			Report on follow-up on recommendations of the Board of Auditors on UNOPS (97/23)
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
17	Oral	I	½ day	Reports on internal oversight
18			½ day	OTHER MATTERS including: - Briefing on UNAIDS
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* **NOTE:** A Special Event on 1998 State of World Population report will be organized by UNFPA for half a day.

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

Table 4. Third regular session 1998 (14-18 September 1998)
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1998/L.4)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the annual session 1998
	CRP	I		Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the annual session 1998
				Outline for Executive Board work plan 1999
				UNDP SEGMENT
2				UNDP 2001 : Progress report
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I/A		Report on the implementation of the budget for biennium 1998-1999 (97/24)
	Official	I		Annual review of the financial situation 1997
			1 day	
		I		Activities of the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
				Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
				Review and revision of UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
4				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A		Review of implementation of the new programming cycle
	Oral	I	1 day	Report on implementation of the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria (97/25)
	Official			Country cooperation frameworks
5				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Audit reports
6	Oral			UNIFEM (97/18)
7			½ day	RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
				UNFPA SEGMENT
8				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I		Annual financial review, 1997
	Official	I		Status of financial implementation of country programmes
	Official	I	1 day	Multi-bilateral and trust fund arrangements (97/26)
	Official	I		Progress in implementing the support budget for 1998-1999 (97/26)
9				SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION
	Official	A		"Partners in Population and Development " (96/9)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
10	Official	A		COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
11			½ day	OTHER MATTERS including: - Field visits
	Oral	I		- Status report on the Coordinating Committee on Health

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and UNOPS = United Nations Office for Project Services.